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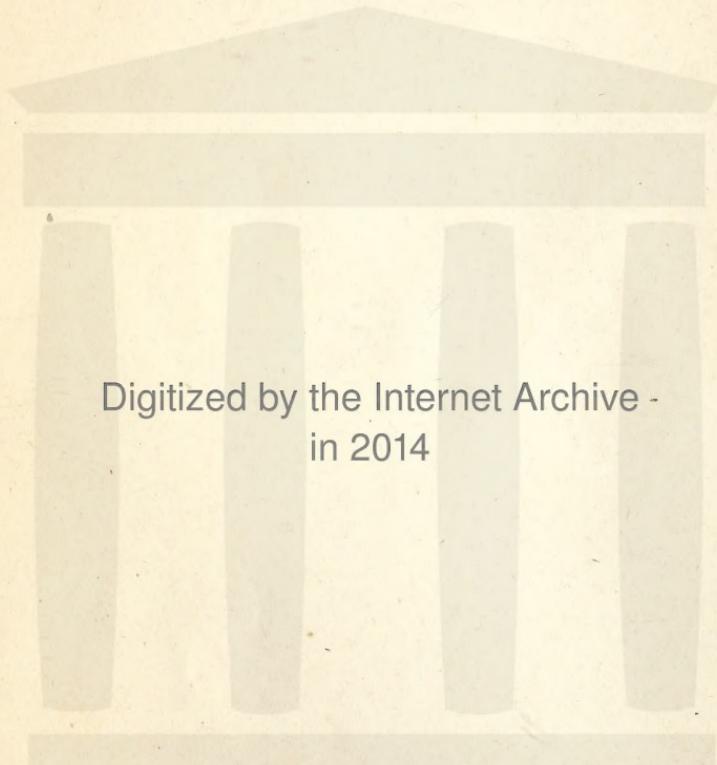
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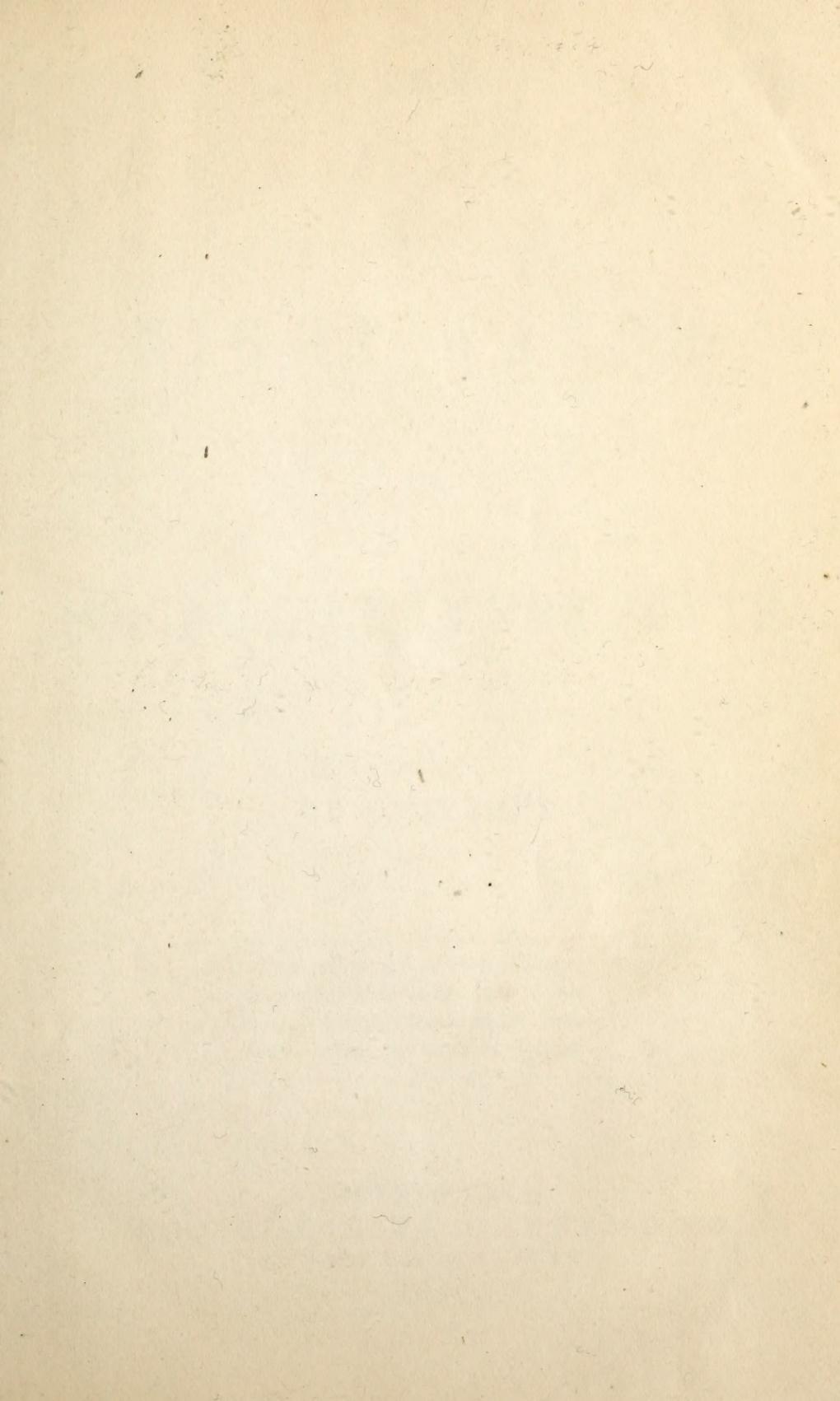
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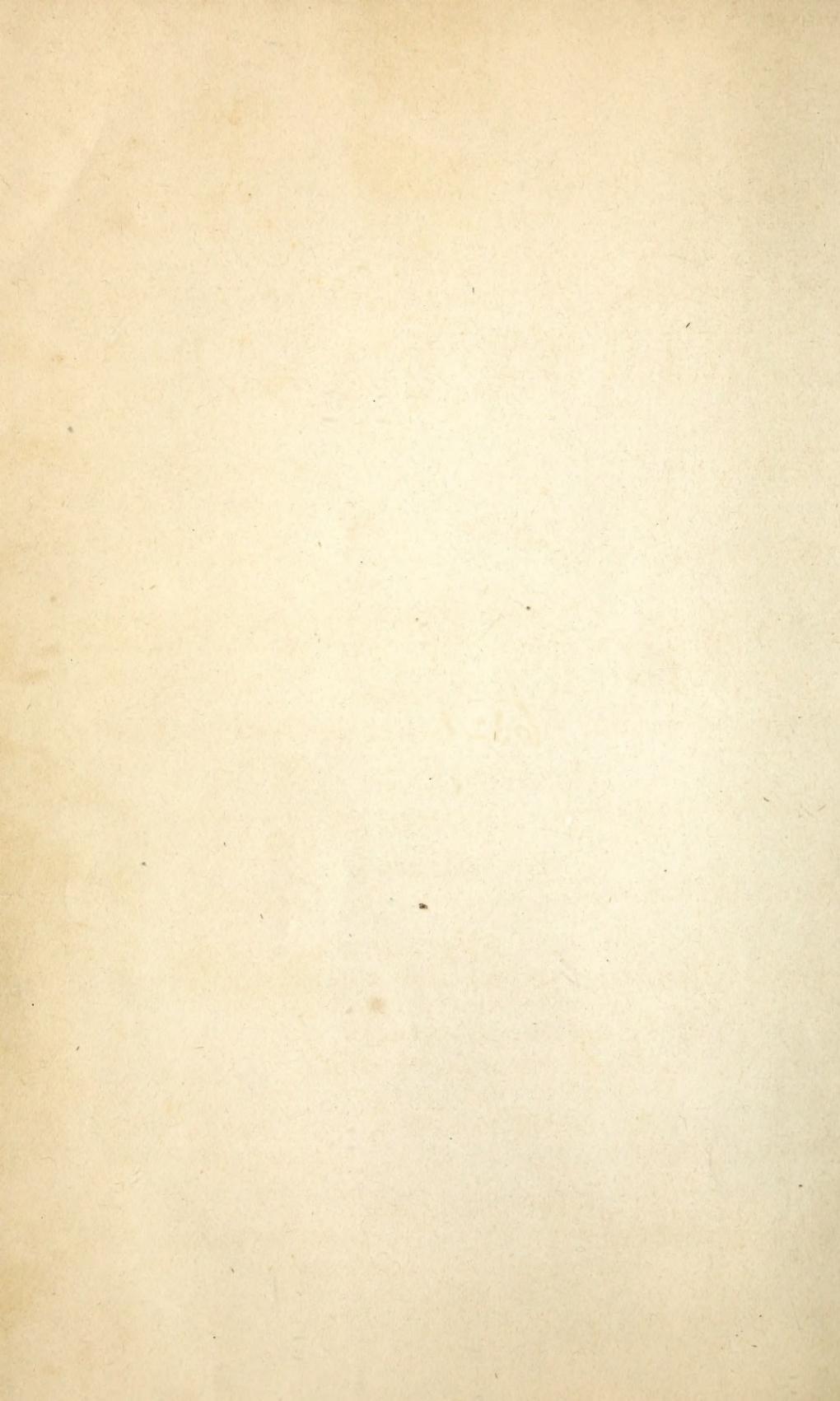
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THE NIGHT WATCH;

OR,

SOCIAL LIFE IN THE SOUTH,



BY SOMEBODY.

Hoffman

Hoffman

"Through all disguise, form, place, or name,
Beneath the flaunting robe of sin,
Through poverty, and squalid shame,
Thou lookest on the man within."

CINCINNATI:

MOORE, WILSTACH, KEYS & CO.
25 WEST FOURTH STREET.

1856.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
CHAPTER I.	
Close Quarters.....	7
CHAPTER II.	
The Parvenue Patroness.....	13
CHAPTER III.	
Household Cares.....	23
CHAPTER IV.	
The Milliner's Shop.....	30
CHAPTER V.	
The little Scotch Woman.....	40
CHAPTER VI.	
Heart Revealing and the True Friend.....	46
CHAPTER VII.	
Scenes in the Sanctuary.....	53
CHAPTER VIII.	
The Dinner Party.....	59
CHAPTER IX.	
Divers Scenes in Sundry Places.....	70
CHAPTER X.	
Nature's Nobleman.....	83

	PAGE.
CHAPTER XI.	
The Journal.....	90
CHAPTER XII.	
A Domestic Scene in High Life.....	101
CHAPTER XIII.	
A Young Raven Fed.....	115
CHAPTER XIV.	
The Siren.....	124
CHAPTER XV.	
The Jew Peddler.....	135
CHAPTER XVI.	
The Neophyte Actor.....	147
CHAPTER XVII.	
The Lover — Soul Phases.....	159
CHAPTER XVIII.	
The Lady and the Toady.....	174
CHAPTER XIX.	
The Miser's Home.....	184
CHAPTER XX.	
The Courteous Manager.....	194
CHAPTER XXI.	
The Ambush.....	199
CHAPTER XXII.	
The Fall.....	210
CHAPTER XXIII.	
The Courtship.....	214
CHAPTER XXIV.	
The Old Jew's Family.....	223

CONTENTS.

v

	PAGE.
CHAPTER XXV.	
The Good Wife.....	230
CHAPTER XXVI.	
The Governor's Levee.....	241
CHAPTER XXVII.	
The Masque.....	264
CHAPTER XXVIII.	
The Forgeries.....	273
CHAPTER XXIX.	
The Letter.....	283
CHAPTER XXX.	
The Wedding.....	301
CHAPTER XXXI.	
The Elopement Discovered.....	324
CHAPTER XXXII.	
The Chamber of Death.....	331
CHAPTER XXXIII.	
The Marriage.....	341
CHAPTER XXXIV.	
The Happy Home.....	345
CHAPTER XXXV.	
The Journal — The Far Past Recalled.....	359
CHAPTER XXXVI.	
The Journal — A Gift.....	374
CHAPTER XXXVII.	
The Journal — An Intriguante.....	391
CHAPTER XXXVIII.	
The Journal — A Stunning Announcement.....	408

PAGE.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

- The Journal — The Return 425

CHAPTER XL.

- The Journal — Paradise and Purgatory 440

CHAPTER XLI.

- The Journal — The Maniac Mother 457

CHAPTER XLII.

- The Journal — Old Friends and Foes 469

CHAPTER XLIII.

- Conscience, the Oracle of God 480

CHAPTER XLIV.

- Retribution, or the Maniac Husband 488

CHAPTER XLV.

- The Happy Family 503

CHAPTER XLVI.

- The Jewess 512

CHAPTER XLVII.

- The Conclusion 520

THE NIGHT WATCH.

CHAPTER I.

CLOSE QUARTERS.

“ HAVE pity on them, for their life
Is full of grief and care;
You do not know one half the woes
The very poor must bear;
You do not see the silent tears
By many a mother shed,
As childhood offers up the prayer,
‘ Give us our daily bread.’ ”

IN one of the large towns in the South, in a street not very remote from the central and business portion of the place, there are still standing two or three mean-looking, dilapidated, gloomy hovels. I know not why these are left there to cumber the earth, and to mar the general prospect, amid the neighboring tenements which present a new, clean, thrifty appearance, unless it be that it is property entailed; which is doubtless the case. The particular house before which we would now conduct our readers, presents a front of about eighteen feet of old, moldy boards, with a jutting, blackened roof. One small window has sidled off to the left, as if weary of standing up so straight; or may be, like the door, it has grown feeble by the weight of so many years, and is trying to find something to lean upon. The walls, as well as the window sills and door lintels, have had a rough coat of white-wash and coarse green paint administered to them

recently, which, by-the-by, only makes one think of the utter futility of trying to make old, worn-out things look fresh and new.

Such was the exterior of this dwelling. Now let us take a survey of the interior. There is neither hall nor corridor ; the old, creaking door opens into the one best room, which is made to serve as parlor, dining room, bedroom, and sometimes kitchen. As I said before, it is lighted by only one narrow window, looking out on the street. The whole place gives evidence of extreme indigence, but everything is forced up to its highest point of usefulness, and made to show to the best advantage. The little old patched up table, and broken work stand, are polished and made decent by frequent brushings and furbishings. The few aged and worn rush-bottom chairs bear marks of the same careful, pains-taking hand. A small, single bed in each corner of the room fills one broad side, while on the other stands an old cupboard in solitary *grandeur*, containing articles of household use. Another little, low, rickety door opens out on a shed, which has been turned into a stall by the present occupants. In this place stands a small cooking-stove, where their meager meals are prepared.

The inmates of the house are an old lady, her granddaughter, and great grandson. The grandmother seems to be the active agent and presiding genius of the place. She is dressed in a cheap calico wrapper. A plain muslin cap, much darned, and a neat white handkerchief is pinned transversely over her bosom. She looks to be in good health, although a cripple. She is at this moment sitting in an old arm chair, which is minus an arm, patched up and mended from top to bottom. She is looking moody, but not positively dissatisfied or disconsolate, as she rocks herself sometimes violently, then more deliberately, and finally subsides into a gentle undulating motion, as her feelings and memories prompt.

The granddaughter, who is young and beautiful, appears to be unhappy. She is sitting in a low chair, quite still, her arms hanging down listlessly by her side, gazing vacantly into the fire. She, unlike her grandmother, is attired carelessly, and in a dress which was once costly, handsome and rich, but is now faded and worn in many places, and if not ragged, we must thank the same poor old lady who, with her natural thrift, with spectacles on nose, has plied the needle in many places. Meantime she sits there, alternately looking at her daughter and the fire.

"Well now! there you are, like the old gray cat in the corner; one about as much use as the other. I say, Myra, what good will it do to sit there moping and gazing into the old rusty grate? It will not put coals into it. I say, don't you hear, child?" and she placed her lips in such close proximity to the lady, whom she called Myra, that she touched her, while she shouted the last words into her ear. The granddaughter started so violently as almost to upset her. The old lady seemed to be vexed, as she with difficulty recovered her equilibrium, exclaiming, "Now is not this too bad? You had better knock me down at once, then I would know exactly how I *stand* in the house." Myra looked at her imploringly, and bending on her those glorious eyes, filled as they now were with a soft and humid light, said,

"Oh, mother, I do most humbly ask your pardon. I would not have been guilty of such rudeness, especially to you, for the world. I hope you will forgive me, dear grandmamma."

"Well, I suppose I must overlook this, as I do everything else, but I can not permit you to sit there forevermore in that way. You must learn to exert yourself, child. True, you have been treated badly: I know all that. But see, God has left you all your faculties, and you have health and strength to work, if not in one way,

then in another. How can you sit there mewed up, sighing and groaning, when there are no provisions in the house, no coal in the cellar, no wood in the yard, and scarce a change of clothing, even for the child, of the coarsest kind? I tell you it will not do. Think you, because God sees fit to withdraw some of his blessings, after having permitted you to enjoy so many of his good things, to be nurtured delicately, and fondled in the lap of luxury, he will now excuse you for not improving the talent which is left? Come, rouse up; unfold the napkin which conceals thy talent, and be doing, lest thou be brought to judgment."

"Oh! God, pity me!" exclaimed the young woman, with such a heart-broken tone and despairing look, that even the stern old lady appeared softened.

"Well, child, I'm sorry that I have to scold so much, but I must stick to the text, 'there is no use in sighing and groaning over spilt milk!'"

"Dear grandma, spare me this one time. I have done what I could. It does seem to me *all* that I could yet awhile. I have complied with the requisitions of our pitiless landlord, and in order to secure to him the miserable pittance we owe him for the rent of this '*palace*,' I have consented to have *myself* put over the door as fashionable dress-maker from New York. Oh, Lord! I pray thee forgive me all the falsehoods and subterfuges which I am now compelled to practice."

Then she folded her arms and resumed her despairing look and attitude, gazing, as was her constant habit, into the fire. The old lady seemed to think she must follow up the subject, and avail herself of the little advantage gained; for it was a point achieved to get poor Myra even to listen. To hear and heed, with a reply or remark, not wholly irrelevant to the subject in hand, were events now of rare occurrence. She therefore again essayed to rouse her granddaughter from her lethargic mood.

“But my daughter, I do not see why you have done this? I did not desire that you should thus humble your proud spirit so much, all at once. I did not intend that you should stoop so low as to become a thing to be ordered about, insulted, and brow-beaten, by the insolent, purse-proud mushrooms, and miserable parvenues of this overgrown city. It is not thus I would have you exert yourself, my dear. Why not make your fine accomplishments available? Music, French, drawing, etc? There is nothing mortifying, degrading or ignoble in these pursuits. You only establish your superiority over the mass: and while your own mental faculties are maturing, you are doing something toward elevating the better portion of the animal. But in this vile employment you can only minister to the vanity and self-love of a parcel of haughty women, heartless butterflies, who will presently treat you with impertinence and contumely. In short, dear child, poor and miserable as we are made by poverty, and the cruelty of man; neglected, deserted, unknown, and unhappy; still I am unwilling that you should expend your time, and exhaust your strength in adorning the bodies of those worms,—in fitting the caterpillar to fly. I will not have it so.”

“Now, my dear grandmother, everything but our wretchedness here (looking around on the bare walls and floor), and that your child is educated, and perhaps a little more gifted than falls to the lot of some others (which in our peculiar situation I deem a great misfortune), has escaped you. Have you forgotten the crowning sorrow of my life? Have you ceased to remember the cause of our leaving home, and fleeing as for our lives, to this remote place, where I desire to shun all associates? Have you? Oh yes! you do seem to have forgotten all, while I never do! Waking or sleeping, it is always the same. Memory, with me, is ‘The worm which never dieth.’ ”

She wrung her hands, and writhed, as if undergoing the intensest agony of spirit, while her fine form, and beautiful features jerked with a spasmodic force. Her cheeks (that soft downy surface, with charming dimples) collapsed and became livid, so that the old lady shrieked out in terror, at the same time catching up the pitcher of water, and throwing its contents into her face. She soon recovered. Who would not, to be so thoroughly baptized in ice-water, in the month of December? She smiled faintly, as she looked up timidly into her mother's face, saying in the same soft, dulcet voice,

"Forgive me, grandma! I could not help it."

"Well! may God forgive us both our trespasses! I fear we are both to blame," rejoined the old lady.

CHAPTER II.

THE PARVENUE PATRONESS.

“THERE are smiles and tears in the mother’s eyes,
For her beautiful boy beside her lies ;
Oh, heaven of bliss ! when the heart o’erflows
With the rapture a mother only knows.”

“WHERE is Clarence ?” said the grandmother.

The daughter looked troubled, and seemed afraid to speak. Grief makes us timid and cowardly sometimes. However, she nerved herself and replied :

“I have sent him to that day-school, just across the street. I hope you will not blame me for doing this ? I could not teach him any longer, if I am to engage in the business indicated by that rude sign over the door.”

The old woman frowned, and moved about uneasily in her chair, as she rejoined :

“Then I should like to know who is to cut the wood for the kitchen stove, fetch the coal, buy our marketing, and bring the water from the pump ? You sit there more dead than alive ; I am crippled, and almost blind ; still you look to me to keep house, have all the meals in order, and make everything snug, and you all comfortable.”

Poor Myra could not refrain from smiling at this tirade of the garrulous, but good-hearted old lady. This enumeration of household cares could not fail to bring to her mind the total destitution of her family. Then she remembered that there was neither coal, wood, nor provisions in the house, and no means to buy.

Just then the old street-door flew open, and there burst into the room, like a “sunbeam,” a little boy about six

years old. He came bounding and dancing into the center of the room, then stopped and threw up his little cap, shouting, "Huzza! I'm head of my class, already, mamma," and he looked so bright, and beautiful, and happy, that you could never for an instant possibly suppose that he was an inmate of that dark, dismal, cold room. One would naturally think of a stray angel, sent there to cheer the desponding inhabitants of the place. So seemed to think the mother; for there was a gleam of joy, and a ray of hope overspreading that pale, sad face.

"Come here, my angel boy, and kiss your mother."

The child flew into her arms, embracing her passionately, then nestled on her bosom, and began to sob; softly repeating, "I love you, mamma; *I* love you. Don't look so mournful, pretty, sweet, good mamma. My heart is full of love for you. Never mind whether anybody else loves you or not." And there they sat, that transcendently beautiful young mother, who, but for her deep dejection, would scarce have seemed beyond early girlhood, and that glorious little boy, locked in each other's arms, weeping as if their only luxury was in tears. Meantime the grandmother looks on sullenly, still rocking herself. Presently the two weepers become calmer; the clouds cleared away from the boy's April face, and the young mother looked less somber.

The child unwound his little arms from her neck, and gently slid from her lap. Approaching his grandmother, looking shy and confused, he said, "I love *you* too, mam."

"Well, I suppose you do," said she, somewhat gruffly. "Who said you didn't? But boy that won't put bread in your mouth, will it? Can you live on these fine tantrums? Do either of you feel any better since that copious shower? I guess you will change your note presently, when you sit down to knives and forks, and empty plates."

The child looked hurt, and instinctively shrunk from her, as we do from whatever gives us pain, and again

drew near to his tender, loving mother. The impressions, impulses, and instincts of childhood are very strong; they can not reason, they do not comprehend, but they feel. These feelings are acute, and they obey their promptings. At an early age they acknowledge the influence of kindness of look, gentleness of word, suavity of manner.

Oh! what a sad, sad spectacle to me, greater than any other, is that of a mournful, dispirited child. Great must be the sufferings, tremendous the hardships, and cruel, more than cruel, the treatment to a child sufficient to crush out its innate buoyancy and mirthfulness—to put out the light and joy of its little soul. In this instance, the young mother had so sheltered her cherub boy from all want and harshness—so adroitly managed to conceal the true situation of her family from him, that save a vague idea which was forced on him by seeing her in tears, and hearing his grandmother's croakings, he had no conception of misfortune or sorrow. True, he knew and felt every day that there was a great change in their mode of life. It had been but a short time since they resided in a fine house, and he was waited on by servants—was petted and caressed. He also remembered to have seen his mother and himself handsomely dressed and apparently surrounded by friends. These reminiscences brought no joy to his young mind, because the bare mention of them drew a cloud over his mother's face, and filled her eyes with tears. He knew this had all vanished. He saw and felt that they lived poorly, were meanly clad, and oftentimes he was cold and hungry. But he also knew that he had only to intimate this to his beautiful mother, when she would by some means supply him with all that was needful to appease his appetite; and when he was cold, he had but to nestle in her bosom, to lie down there and listen to the beatings of that heart whose every impulse he knew was for him. The little fellow adored

his mother with such an entire devotion that it seemed sufficient for him to be near her. This was happiness in itself, yet awhile. But, as the old grandmother said, it would not satisfy the cravings of nature. Presently he crept up to her, and asked in a very humble voice, "If she had any supper for him."

For a moment she hesitated whether she would box his ears, or trouble herself to explain to him the low state of their financial concerns, pantry, larder, cellar, etc. An impatient movement, with a deprecatory look from the mother, induced the grandmother to desist. So she seated herself again and commenced rocking.

Myra now rose and left the room for a few moments. When she returned, she held in her hand a stale loaf of bread, a few drops of milk in a broken tumbler, and one dried herring. After spreading a tattered cloth on the little old table, she placed these articles of food on it, which were every morsel the house contained. Then going to the cupboard, she took from it a small tea canister, and a little delf teapot, and approaching her mother, asked her if she would make the tea. By this time the old lady had been disarmed of her wrathful feelings by the subdued dignity of her granddaughter, and taking the things, she said,

"Well, child, where is the water? I thought every fool knew that it took three things besides the tea to make it: water, sugar, and milk."

"Oh I will bring the water," said the bright little boy. With that he caught up the bucket, ran to the pump, filled it, all the time singing one of those beautiful waltzes which he had so often heard his mother play both on the harp and piano.

When he returned, he found standing before the door two ladies, who were trying to decipher the rude sign. One of them said (and his blood boiled while he listened), "But see, the fool has put no name up. I wonder if

she has moved. ‘Fashionable dress-making by nobody.’ It amounts to that; and look what sort of a house too. Dear me, how very absurd it is to think of having such elegant fabrics as yours are, made up in such a looking place as this. Why, really I don’t think I could wear a dress made here. You may depend upon it, Emma, she is some poor straggler altogether unworthy of our patronage.”

“Why, now, mamma,” replied a pretty, innocent-looking girl (whose head was no doubt full of all sort of romance about love in a cottage, birds, flowers, and whiskers; and her heart, too, overflowing with benevolence and sympathy, ready to yield up both to the first who should make a demand), “you should not prejudge this person. You do not know but this poor old house may present a very different aspect within. Shall we see for ourselves? Shall I knock?”

Just then the little Clarence came up, bending under his burden, the water bucket. The elder lady said, rudely,

“Boy, do you live here?”

“Yes,” said the child, catching the tone and spirit in which he was addressed.

“Then what is the name of the woman who sews?” pointing to the sign.

The boy pushed by her without speaking, and would have shut the door in her face, had not the girl added,

“Now, mamma, how could you accost that beautiful boy in that way?”

“Why, Emma, you are a fool. Pray, how would you have me address such people?”

Emma did not reply, but turning to Clarence, said,

“My little son, my pretty little man, we wish to come in here, to see the lady; we have some business with her. Will you have the kindness to open the door?”

In a moment a sweet smile beamed on the child's face (which when lighted up by happiness was as beautiful as his mother's). He touched his cap, and as speedily as he could, opened the old creaking door, saying,

"Walk in, if you please, ladies."

These two aristocratic members of the *best* society, seemed to be amazed as they viewed the premises. Disgust and impertinence usurp the place of surprise with the elder lady ; while mingled emotions of astonishment, admiration, and commiseration are written on the countenance of the girl. Her eyes were riveted on the face of Mrs. Wise, the mother of the boy. She looked as if uncertain whether she saw aright, and was almost unwilling to trust to her sense of seeing.

"Surely, I am deceived ! It is some bright, beautiful optical illusion. She has not moved. It is some charming picture, or splendid statue. I will approach and feast my eyes."

The elder lady, all this time, had seen nothing but the squalid misery of the apartment, and the poor old woman who was still proceeding with her scanty preparations for supper. In the meantime, the child had placed himself by his mother, ready to share with her, whether good or bad fortune.

The young lady was most elaborately dressed, had pleasing manners, a conciliatory tone of voice, and rather pretty face. She approached that mother and child with a respectful air, although a little bit too patronizing to suit the one or the other. The boy possessed all his mother's delicacy of feeling, with her sensitiveness.

"Madam, I have called to get some dresses fitted. We were passing, and happened to descry the sign over the door."

Poor Mrs. Wise trembled from head to foot. All the blood in her veins rushed to her face, and, by as sudden a

revulsion, back to her heart, thus leaving that face as colorless as marble. The girl again looked amazed, and soliloquized softly,

"Just now I thought her a most lovely painting, looking like patient resignation. Now it is a sublime piece of statuary; the similitude of grief! Oh! how exquisite. What shall I say or do next? I feel greatly puzzled, and somewhat disconcerted."

I presume the interview would have ended here, so much was she, in her over-wrought notions of romantic sensibility, afraid of wounding the feelings of the unhappy lady; but just then her mother came rustling up in her brocade of regal purple, calling out in a high-pitched voice, "We would like to have several dresses made, and we want them done in double quick time. We were on our way to Madam Bertram's, who is both fashionable and stylish, as well as distinguished for good taste. This foolish child would put in here.

"Will you let us see some of your fashions? Some of your latest prints and patterns from Paris?"

Poor Mrs. Wise turned away, and did all she could to control her feelings—but to no purpose. This was the initiatory step. With all her griefs and troubles she had not as yet known much of humiliation. These were the first witnesses of her degradation. Her poor, crushed heart had not yet become indurated by slights and contumely. She turned from them, and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs. The child clung round her knees, weeping, too, as he stretched out one little hand, holding the open palm toward them:

"Go away! Go away! You have hurt poor mamma's heart." He always expressed himself thus, because he had so often seen her, when troubled, press her hand tightly over her heart. "You have made her cry. Now go away."

The lady seemed vexed, and casting a scornful look around, said,

"Come daughter, come Emma Calderwood, this is no place for us. I am disgusted and tired of the sight."

Not so with the young girl. She again approached Mrs. Wise, took her hand, and looking into her face, with the most sympathetic as well as respectful expression, added—

"Pardon, if you please, my mother and myself, if we have given you pain, I sincerely regret it. Believe me, I could not foresee this."

"Oh! I am so wretched," sobbed out poor Myra, in reply, "I am driven to this expedient by the direst necessity, but I am so poorly fitted for it yet. After a while I shall get used to these hard things; then I shall do better. Will you have the kindness to excuse this weakness?" She advanced to Mrs. Calderwood—

"Madam, I am now ready to be employed."

"Oh yes; I dare say you are, but it matters not. I believe I would rather not have my fine silks sprinkled over with salt water every day, or whenever you feel like getting up a scene. I think, however, I will stop and see your fashions."

"Alas! madam, I have none. I did not think of this."

"Then of course you can not expect such persons as *we* are to give you our work." And then with a disdainful toss of the head, and a sneer as she again glanced around the room, she called to her daughter and swam out of the house.

Before the girl followed, she whispered a few words to Mrs. Wise, then slipping something into the hand of the little boy, bowed politely to the old lady, and also passed into the street.

After they had gone, the grandmother placed the tea and toast on the table, hobbled to a trunk, unlocked it,

and took out the very smallest sugar dish, filled but indifferently well with brown sugar, muttering to herself all the time —

“Yes, I still lock up the sugar from the negroes just the same as when we had them to steal, which they will all do, with a very few exceptions. This is only the force of habit, that’s all. Come, children, and partake of what God has given us, and be thankful.” Then the three poor, destitute, lonely creatures surrounded the table. The grandmother asked a blessing; offered a sincere but brief prayer of thanksgiving and praise.

That woman was old and ugly, had an ungracious manner; was crusty of speech, impatient and stern sometimes. But beneath all this beat a heart which was honest, and true, and kind, and good. And as she sat there in the presence of God, and pronounced that humble, heartfelt invocation, who can affirm that she did not stand as fair as angels, and seraphs, and saints; and it may be, was far more acceptable to God himself, than they who sat in high places, with crowned heads.

When they had finished the meal, they drew around the little grate. Clarence had crept to his mother’s knees as usual, and was now trying to draw her attention to a gold piece which had been given him by the young girl, Emma Calderwood. His mother seemed to feel worried at it.

“I don’t want it, my son, I can’t use it until I have rendered an equivalent for it.”

“But mamma, she gave it to *me*. I did not ask her for it, and now I will give it to you. Come, take it dear mamma.”

“Give it to me, Clarry; your mother is a simpleton, with her high Roman virtue, and Spartan notions of endurance, and independence, and all that. I will take it, and look upon it as a real God-send. I will, to-morrow, lay it out for food to keep our souls within our bodies.”

The child hands her the money, adding, "Grandma, you must buy something pretty for my sweet mother."

"Why, child, it is five dollars! Well, no matter, the world owes everybody a living; for it is God's world, and we are all his children; and if he "feeds the young ravens," how much more will he feed us, who are so precious in his sight—having paid such a ransom for us. Yes, Clarry, to-morrow we will lay in a little stock of provisions, and when that is gone we will continue to hope and believe that He will still supply us from his own store-house." So then, after committing her little family to the protection of that Omnipotent arm, she laid herself down, calmly and peaceably to rest, without fear or distrust. They were all, with a sleeping world, in the hands of the living God. This faith sufficeth.

CHAPTER III.

HOUSEHOLD CARES.

"VAIN we number every duty,
Number all our prayers and tears,
Still the spirit lacketh beauty,
Still it droops with many fears."

THE sun was up and had traveled many a mile on his daily journey, before the inmates of the hovel had left their pillows. Myra woke first, and looking around on all the appointments of the miserable place, sighed so deeply, so heavily, that one might suppose the heart which sent it forth had been riven.

She took into her arms the beautiful boy, who slept so sweetly by her side, looking so pure and innocent. She gazed on him with a fond and swelling heart. A placid smile o'erspread his dimpled face. "Surely," cried she, "angels are whispering to thee. For your sake my darling one, I will nerve myself to endure all things. I will endeavor to forget the past, bear with the present, and look hopefully to the future. I will learn to work, to submit to impertinence, and cease to brood over my wrongs, my sweet little Clarry. Yes, my boy, you are to be educated; you must be fitted to take your place among men, even though I, your unfortunate mother, should fall in the life-struggle to accomplish it."

She slipped softly from the bed—a new spirit seemed to have passed into her. For the first time in a great while, there seemed to be, even to her, an object in life. She dressed herself in the poor faded garments, all she possessed on earth, and after having made her ablutions

in freezing water, and combed her hair with almost frozen fingers, she betook herself to the novel task of making a fire. Never before in all her life had she attempted a thing of the sort; never had lighted a fire, or dressed without one. During the space which had intervened between her luxurious mode of life and her troubrous one, she had through inertness, thoughtlessness, or maybe apathy, suffered herself to be waited on by her grandmother, who, by dint of good management and great industry, had contrived to provide a few comforts. Moreover, she was wholly absorbed with her griefs—and thus it occurred. Her intentions, motives, and actions were all good, as far as she remembered. Now, poor lady, she fails in all. She could not get the fire to burn; she used all such aids as the place afforded.

At last she succeeded in getting a faint blaze in the grate; but this was a small matter. The fire in the stove was a stupendous undertaking. Her courage faltered here. She struggled hard, but accomplished nothing. She overturned the kettle, threw down the poker, shovel and tongs, until at last she sat down and wept with fatigue and vexation. What must she do? What more could she do? And now to crown her troubles, after giving up all hope of success with the stove, she returned to the room, expecting to find a cheerful fire blazing there, when lo! every spark was extinct, and she had her first work to do over again.

The old lady begins to yawn and groan, and in the same querulous voice to croak:

“Now this is hard on me, one of my age, to have to get up and do as much service as any negro girl in the city.”

Poor Myra, hearing this, came forward, and with the tears still glistening in her eyes, declared she had been up for the last hour exerting herself, but all to no purpose. The grandmother hobbled up, and as she dressed continued to grumble all the time.

"Yes, so it is. This comes of not raising our children and grandchildren like we have ourselves been brought up. My father was rich too: but where I was born and bred, nothing was more common than for girls to wait on themselves. Many hundreds and thousands of times have I made my fire; yet was my father one of the magnates of the land. It was different though with that poor child. Where she was reared it was so difficult to do anything of the sort. Her good, docile, gentle mother must e'en do like other people, and she doated on her daughter so much, thinking she was quite too pretty to do anything in the shape of work. I wonder if *that* poor thing could make a biscuit to save her life? I reckon not."

She had by this time completed her simple toilet, and now with the greatest ease makes both fires, and sets about preparing coffee. Myra, in the meantime had made the beds, swept the floor, dressed the child, placed the chairs in order, and spread the table for breakfast. True, all this was poorly done; but she did her best. When the bread-cart came by, the grandmother bought a loaf, and also a pint of fresh milk. But they had neither meat nor butter.

Again they surround that frugal board, and the good old lady invokes another blessing.

Scarcely had this meal passed, when the same young lady who has been made known to the reader as Miss Emma Calderwood, made her appearance. She came running into the room, flew to the fire, spread out her hands, and sitting down commenced,

"Good morning, ladies. I hope you are both well. I declare this morning is enough to freeze out all the love, and generosity, as well as politeness, that one may happen to have in her heart. Don't you think so darling?" said she, kissing the little Clarence.

The child smiled languidly. He did not know exactly how to take such familiarity from an entire stranger. As

usual, he crept up to his mother, and placing one little hand around her neck, stood there silently awaiting the result of this early visit.

"I have played mamma the nicest trick. Poor mamma is very peculiar. I felt so much hurt at what occurred here yesterday. I do hope you will not remember it. At all events, do not let it, I beseech you, make a difference between us." This was addressed to both ladies. Then turning to Myra: "I intend (with your permission) that *we* shall be friends. My heart is set on it. I liked you all, the instant I laid my eyes on you. Last night at tea, I would tell papa of our little adventure, in spite of all mamma's winks across the table. Papa is quite different from mamma; he is very indulgent to me, his only pet, and suffers me to obey my impulses sometimes, right or wrong. When I take a fancy to any one, he allows me to follow the bent of my inclinations. I told him all about you this morning, down in the parlor, where I pretended to be practicing; but in truth it was only to get away from mamma, because she sometimes makes herself so disagreeable to us both. He kissed me and said, 'If matters stood as I seemed to think, he was not surprised at my admiration.' Now, my dear ladies," said she, bowing to both, "you must consent to receive papa, for my sake, at first; afterward for himself—for you can not fail to like him, he is so handsome, and the most agreeable of men."

Seeing a troubled expression on the face of Myra, she looked quickly toward the old lady, but there was nothing in her wrinkled countenance either to reassure or discourage; she pursued her morning avocations as if there had been no stranger in the room. Then the girl sought the face of the daughter again; that perplexed expression had given place to one of intense pain, and she became extremely agitated.

The grandmother called impatiently to her, "Myra, Myra, bethink yourself! What are you doing?"

In an instant the cloud passed away, and she smiled languidly. This kind-hearted girl was very thoughtless, and sometimes indiscreet in her manner of even doing good. She could not comprehend that what she had said was even remotely the cause of Myra's present excitement.

"I'm sure you will love papa, he is so fine looking, so genteel and well bred, so polite and fashionable. Now, the long and short of it is this: you must let us both be of service to you. I should feel so proud of aiding — I mean, of being allowed to aid such a lady as you are. And you, my little Prince Regent, I have fallen dead in love with you. Won't you be my little sweetheart? Here are a few trifles which I bought for you on the way."

She opened several bundles, and discovered to the delighted child a great variety of pretty toys. Infancy is easily won off from troubles. The bright little fellow clasped his hands together in the attitude of thankfulness; then clapped them and fairly shouted with joy —

"Oh! mamma! Oh! grandmamma! just look, just such things as cousin Walter used to bring me. Mamma, I must give this good lady my cousin Walter for a sweetheart. *I'm* too little, you know. Where is he? I must tell her about him."

A look from his mother checked his raptures. He looked abashed, and suddenly became silent. The girl remarked this, but was too thoroughly good-natured and well-bred to make any comments. She went on —

"See here, my little man."

"Oh yes! a beautiful gilt ball, looking like pure gold," cried the child, "and a splendid top, with such an assortment of marbles, and this beautiful little knife. Oh! dear mamma, tell me how to thank the good lady."

Emma looked at Mrs. Wise (the mother was watching with delight the radiant face of her son).

"Oh! my goodness! I never saw such a change. I do

wish papa could see you just now while you are smiling." In her delighted surprise she jumped up, scattering the sugar plums, nuts, and raisins to the further ends of the room, flies to Mrs. Wise, seizes her hand, and exclaims with enthusiasm: "Oh! madam! O my dear friend! promise me one thing; that you will always smile on me in that way when I come; then I will steal away from mamma every day, that I may come and sun my heart. I have heard of rays of light, and moonbeams, and April showers, and sunny skies, but I never saw anything like that bright smile in all my life before. Will you smile thus when I bring papa to see you? Yet I fear it will turn his head."

She reseated herself and continued to open the little stores. Clarence had succeeded in gathering up the spilt comfits. "Come here, love; ask ma and grandma to do you the favor to partake with you," handing him a large paper full of fresh figs and beautiful white grapes. These had been bought more with a view to regale the two ladies than to please the child.

Now, it was a most difficult thing for that old lady's face to relax into a smile; it was so unpracticed in such *levities*; but she did her best toward it, which amounted to little more than a grimace. Yet her words were kind, as she thanked Miss Emma for thinking of her. Her voice, though far from silvery, was much less grating (the oil of kindness had found its way to her rusty temper), and though not smooth, was at all times firm and steadfast when it became her duty to speak, and never backward in praising God and in reproving sin.

Emma rose to depart, approaching the old lady, she said, "Madam, I hope we shall be very good friends in future."

"Oh! yes, God knows it stands me in hand to be very grateful for everything in the shape of friendship. But, young lady, I'm not much in favor of such sudden and

violent attacks. Good does not always come of it. You know nothing of us, nor we of you. Presently, maybe, you'll change your mind, or you may tire of us; or some one may ridicule you about it; then you'll regret that you ever expressed yourself so warmly. Better take things a *leetle* more coolly, my dear, for your own sake. But, under God, I give you fervent thanks for this outpouring of the milk of human kindness. Yesterday, and the day before, and for many days, I thought it was all dried up. I thank heaven, for the credit of human nature, that we have met you." And this plain, upright, downright, honest-hearted old woman brushed a tear from her bleared eyes.

The girl pressed her hand, as she said, "I am very happy to find you care enough for me to admonish me. I shall long remember that precept, and hope to be benefited also by your example."

Myra followed her to the door, and explained to her that she expected to render an equivalent in sewing for the gold piece left with the child. The girl looked hurt, broke away from her, ran down the street a short distance, then returning, kissed the mother and little boy affectionately, adding,

"Why did you wish to mortify me by speaking in that way? Was it because mamma treated you as she did? I could not help it. Nay, say no more. Can not I be allowed to make the most beautiful thing in all creation a little present, when I have such an abundance?"

CHAPTER IV.

THE MILLINER'S SHOP.

“ Of all the causes which conspire to blind
Man’s erring judgment, and misguide the mind;
What the weak head, with strongest bias rules,
Is pride, the never-failing vice of fools.”

WHEN Mrs. Calderwood left the hovel and had returned to her splendid mansion, she threw herself down on a sofa and commenced rating Emma. In the first place, she was very angry with her daughter for proposing, and herself for condescending to enter such a place. She would say, “ What a fool I was, and what a fool you are, Emma, to think of people of our cast stooping so low!”

The girl was facetious, and did not stand in awe of her mother; she very quietly replied,

“ Poor dear mamma, I did not know that you had to *stoop*. I went in without. You didn’t strike your head I hope though, mamma? Yet the door was quite low.”

“ You are a little fool! I consider myself very badly treated by that insolent woman. Who wanted to witness all those tragedy-queen airs in a milliner’s shop? I go to the theater when I wish to see acting. And that old crone was so hateful; yet I declare I liked her a thousand times more than I did the pretty one. Why, Emma, she makes herself a perfect Niobe, or whatever it is the heathens used to call them crying goddesses. I tell you now, once for all, I like the old woman the best, and if she could sew, I would give her some work to help her along.”

“ Yes, mamma, I don’t doubt it—for I have observed

that you are particularly sympathetic toward old *ugly* women. I don't know why either—you can't have a fellow-feeling for them, have you, ma'am?" Mrs. Calderwood was exceedingly homely.

Mrs. Green and Mrs. Gray are announced. After the usual *nothings* are passed, she recounts to them this singular adventure. Several other ladies call: the story is told to all with many embellishments, and so it travels; each one bestowing her own additions and adornments, until it is made quite a little romance of. This mischievous woman has done all this to gratify a natural malevolence of temper, and a peculiar spite she feels for all pretty women. It excites great curiosity, and the ladies determine to give this mysterious stranger a call.

Miss Jones chimes in: "Yes, indeed, Mis Callerwood, I do think *madame* nature had little to do to lavish such gifts on a poor thing whom fortune has discarded. I shall call some time to-morrow, if I can make any sort of an excuse. Oh, now I remember, I'll take an old *skuirt* to her to quilt."

"I'll go with you," replied Mrs. Calderwood, getting up and beginning to look animated. "I'll go with you; I just want to see what sort of airs and tantrums she'll take on herself next time."

Miss Emma Calderwood had just finished speaking and left them, Mrs. Wise had resumed her low seat, and her listless attitude by the fire,—the child crouching at her feet,—when they were startled by a thumping or beating at the door; I can not call it a rap or even a knock. The child springs up, his mother requests him to go to the door, which he opens, and in stride Mrs. Calderwood and Miss Nancy Jones. Myra did not rise from her seat. She seemed intuitively to understand that they meant to insult her, and wished to maltreat her. To their arrogant "good morning, ma'am," she bowed slightly, pointing to

seats, then resumed her reading. Clarence had shoved a couple of chairs to the fire, then crept back to his mother's side.

After a short time Mrs. Calderwood said, in a very supercilious way, "Mrs. —— I have brought you a customer, Miss Jones, Mrs. ——."

A very slight inclination of her head, and then she lays the paper in her lap, and looks, not at the ladies, but into the fire.

"Did I understand you, madam, last evening, to say that your Parisian fashions would shortly arrive?"

"I do not know, madam, what you understood; but I said not a word of the sort."

"Well, then, when do you expect them?"

"Never," said Myra, very haughtily.

"Now that's cool, isn't it?"

"'Tis honest, at least," rejoined Miss Jones. "Can I get you, Mrs. ——, to quilt me an under-skirt? I have one I want to get made out of old dress-tails."

No reply—Myra resumed her newspaper.

"When can you have it done?" she went on, winking at Mrs. Calderwood.

"I do not understand any such work. I will not undertake it."

"Pray, then, what do you understand?" added Mrs. Calderwood. "Yesterday you plead ignorance about what your sign out there intimates; now you can't do plain sewing. Will you have the kindness to inform us what you do understand, and what you will undertake?"

"I understand clearly, madam, that you came here this morning to maltreat me; therefore the sooner we close this interview the better, and I undertake to protect myself and family as best I may, from insult; also to rid my house speedily of any who are wicked and cruel enough to meditate such unprovoked attacks."

She made a sign to the child, who went himself to the

door and set it wide open, then took his place on one side, as if to show the ladies out. They took the hint. Miss Jones rose first and set up a giggle, which seemed to incense the little boy, whose face flushed, and tears started to his eyes as he looked at his mother, who was very pale, but calm.

"Hoity! toity! but she's high-flown and lofty, though, isn't she, Mis Callerwood?"

Mrs. Calderwood glared at poor Myra with those great, pale, blue eyes, and in passing, said, "I'll make you sorry for this."

"I do not doubt it, madam," said Myra.

Ere the door was closed, two other ladies entered. They came without glancing over the room, or showing any surprise, which was a great relief to the inmates. Coming up to Mrs. Wise (who was now expecting impertinence from every one, and did not at first rise,) they greeted her with a courteous good morning: she in return, received them in the most polished lady-like way. The lady introduced herself as Mrs. Green, and then presented her daughter, Miss Mary Green.

Myra invited them to the fire, and laid aside her paper. Then there were a few trite, but necessary remarks about the weather, and a little well-timed notice of the child. It was clear that this was done to open the way for some business. Poor Myra felt the delicacy of the procedure, and it was with the greatest difficulty she could control her feelings.

Matters had progressed thus far, when the poor old crippled grandmother came hobbling in with a huge basket on her arm. She did not perceive the ladies, and was taken greatly by surprise, and really looked amazed, when Myra got up and said almost cheerfully, "Allow me, ladies, to make you acquainted with my grandmother; Mrs. Wise, Mrs. and Miss Green."

The young lady rose at once and offered her seat at the fire. Mrs. Wise took it unhesitatingly, and as she threw herself into it, said,

"Thank you, my dear. *I am* very tired, as you can no doubt see. All good, well-bred young ladies have a sympathy for the aged and the infirm. Clarry, my son, bring that stool and place it here. Now, Miss Green, you will do me the favor to sit by me." The child brought an old backless chair from the shed and set it down as directed. The girl seated herself.

"Oh! you are so cold; let me help you off with your gloves."

When she had removed them (for the old lady was quite passive, looking pleasantly into her face), Miss Green took those poor, withered hands, which were stiff with cold and hard from servitude, and chafed them until all coldness disappeared from them, as well as all gruffness from the countenance.

When they are about to depart the elder lady became embarrassed, hesitated. At last she said rather hurriedly: "Mrs. Wise, I am going to ask a favor of you. My daughter will leave home soon, to be absent some time. I shall be much hurried, fitting out her wardrobe. Will you assist us? I shall take it as a favor, and will be most happy to make all due return."

Myra's eyes filled with tears. She could not speak. Then ensued a pause, which was only broken by the child saying, as he tugged at his mother's hand, to gain her attention,

"Oh! yes, mamma, you must help that good lady to sew. God sent her here to get you to help her. He knows how nicely you can stitch, mamma, and He wants her to have her work done well. Grandmamma says God orders everything, and all things; then He sent these ladies here, and Miss Emma too."

He jumped up to the little cupboard, gets his paper of confectionary, and pressed them to partake, saying—“Another good lady brought me these.”

Mrs. Wise pressed their hands in silence; while the grandmother uttered in a voice husky with emotion, “God will reward and bless you for all kindness to *His* poor. We thank you for His dear sake.”

When they were gone, the grandmother, perhaps to avoid a scene, calls little Clarry to her in a cheerful tone,

“Come here, son, and see what grandma has bought with your gold piece. Quite a little store. Get your slate and calculate it.”

He ran off with alacrity. When he returned, he seated himself, saying, “Now I am ready, mam, to *cypher it all up*. By what rule must I work? Addition, subtraction, division, or multiplication?”

“Well, I reckon it will take your entire stock of knowledge in each one. This is a wholesale business of ours this morning.”

“I’m waiting, grandma.”

“Child, bring me that basket,” said she to Myra. She repeated it in a louder voice: “Myra, Myra, don’t you hear me speak to you?”

Then the poor lady started up, and looking wildly around, said, “Did you speak to me, grandmother?”

“Oh! Lord have mercy on us! What! dreaming again? Hoped you had got waked up. I thought so just now, when those ladies were here. I want you to bring me that new basket. Now begin, sir. First of all, I gave fifty cents for the basket, set that down; twenty-five for butter, fifty for tea, fifty for coffee, twenty-five for loaf sugar, twenty-five for brown sugar, twenty-five for molasses, twenty for rice. Then I came by the market and got two little beefsteaks and some nice country sausages, these were fifty cents. I bought a dollar’s worth

of coal, and a cart-load of wood for the little stove. I gave a man a dime to bring the basket. I had forgotten, I have a few potatoes. And here is fifteen cents left, which you must have to do as you please with."

"Then where will you get the money to buy a little milk for your and mamma's coffee, or to get the warm loaf!"

"Oh mercy! sure enough, or to pay for the hauling the coal and wood, and for cutting it up. What shall we do?" cried the old lady. "I had quite forgotten all this."

Just then there was a noise in the street, as of something being thrown out, with a thundering knock at the door.

"Hallo! there."

Mrs. Wise, the elder, limped to the door. A red-haired, savage-looking man, his face and hands smeared and begrimed over with mud and coal dust, came forward, and demanded the money, twenty-five cents for the hauling. She offered him fifteen, saying, "This is all I have in the world. I will pay the other dime soon."

He refused it, adding, while he looked at her insolently, "Then, be Jasus! ye hadn't ought to employ honest men to work, when ye know ye haint got the tin to pay 'em. I tell you, 'auld one,' I wants my money. I'm a poor man, what lives by my labor, and what axes no favors of iny body, only to pay me my wages."

"Well, my friend, I know; but this is every cent I have on God's earth."

"Thin I'll jist take some o' them good things what ye had in the basket when I met ye down by your coal pen."

"Oh no! this must not be; these are all the provisions we have."

The daughter could stand it no longer. She came to the door, her eyes flashing fire and her face flushed. There she stood in all her native majesty and beauty, looking at

the man for a moment in silence. The poor craven wretch actually cowered before her ; she saw it, and in a voice of contemptuous pity, said,

" Go away, sir, and call this afternoon ; then perhaps I may be able to settle with you."

The man doffed his cap. " Yes, me leddy, but what time would you have me come ? "

" Five o'clock," said Myra.

At the same moment a cart is driven up by a negro boy, who, throwing out the wood, comes up to Myra, takes off his hat, scratching his woolly pate : " Missus, you owes me fifteen cents, if you please, mam."

" Call presently, my good little *uncle*."

" Yes, mam, I will," and he drove off.

" My God ! " said Myra, throwing herself down in a chair, " do I deserve all this suffering ? Insult, cold, hunger, with prostration of soul and body."

After sitting still for some time, her eyes cast down, her head bowed as in humility, she said,

" Mother, I have an idea that this thing is being pushed too far. I think I'll end it. What is life worth to me now ? One brazier of charcoal, with the use of that little shed, some night when all the windows and doors are closed, and I shall be beyond this misery."

Hush, Myra, that is impious. Think of your child."

The little fellow came in laughing, having been highly amused with the unloading of the carts. He jumped gaily into his mother's lap, throwing his arms around her neck, and kissing her fondly. For the first time he finds those impassioned caresses meet no return. He slid from her lap, while her arms fall down despairingly by her side. Her eyes are fixed on vacancy ; she can not weep ; all softness is dried up. Adversity hardens some hearts which are naturally gentle and tender. Her's could only be reached through kindness, noble deeds, generous actions. Squalid misery brought no feeling but that

of disgust, rebellion, and loathing of life. We know this is all wrong, but we are recording facts; putting them down as they really are, and not as they should be.

Poor little Clarence crept to his grandmother, and hid his face in her apron, sobbing out "What is the matter with mamma."

"Oh, God only knows child. I can't understand her high ways. Your mother, my dear, although my own grandchild, is a riddle to me. She has grand ways even in being sorry. *Sublime in grief* I suppose the book people would call it. Now, for my part, when God withdraws the light from me, I just know I have done something to displease him; and although I may not exactly at the time *feel* what it is, I believe that it is good for me to be chastised. Then I make up my mind at once, to submit, pray, and repent. But I never stop work, mind you, child. Having put my shoulder to the wheel, I do not withdraw it. After awhile he suffers me to come home to the Saviour. But this is the darkest season I have ever known. Yet, what matter? It is not too dark for the light of his forgiving smiles to penetrate and scatter. He is looking on, dear children, and will suffer things to go just so far and no further. In his own good time he will lift the burden, or take us home. Yes, Clarry, take us home to heaven; where the best and truest friend we ever had is waiting for us. Blessed Jesus! thou art indeed a true friend to the poor, and needy, and wretched. 'If thou art for us, who shall be against us?'"

Another thundering knock at the door. A man stands there with baton in hand; he is clothed in coarse furs, coat buttoned up to his eyes, over which a fur cap is drawn so as almost to conceal them. This is the guardian of the streets, whose business it is to make the ways straight and smooth, for the rich and great to walk in, lest they strike their feet against a stone. The man calls out in a loud and somewhat gruff voice, "Wood and coal in the

street — can't stay — must be removed before sundown — heavy fine, else."

He was about to pass on, when Myra, with a pensive, abstracted air, goes to the door. The man looks at her with amazement, and involuntarily takes off his cap.

"What is it, sir?" asked the absent-minded lady.

"Well! I don't know now. Can I be of any service to you, miss?"

He approached very near to her, looking steadfastly in her face, with much more of curiosity and admiration than impertinence. Though he came up with a deferential manner he advances too close — the lady suddenly recovers from her abstraction and slams the door in his face. He utters an impatient exclamation, and a little oath; then moves off, dubiously shaking his head, and repeating to himself as he hurries along :

"Well, she *is* pretty — there's no mistake about that. But what right had she to insult me in that way? To slam the door in my face, and she living in that old shanty, too. Such beautiful women should not expose their sweet faces at such a door as that, if it offend them for such men as me to gaze at them. I shouldn't have hurt her little, white hand; only meant to touch it, and offer my services. But zounds! she looked grand. Oh, wouldn't she queen it over a fellow? I reckon she is some great lady from over seas, and is unfortunate; maybe been badly treated, robbed, deserted, forsaken. If so I don't blame her. I rather think I did gaze too hard at her — the unhappy do not like to be speered at. Some other time, maybe I can help her along; do her a quiet little service. I'd do anything for her, just to get a look at her beautiful countenance. About sundown I'll pass along there again, and if that wood and coal are there still, I'll knock again; then maybe I may get another glance; but it shall be a distant view. I'll never offend her again. I wonder who she is, and where she came from?"

CHAPTER V.

THE LITTLE SCOTCH WOMAN.

“THE tear down childhood’s cheek that flows,
Is like the dew-drop on the rose;
When next the summer breeze comes by,
And waves the bush, the flower is dry.”

Poor Myra seemed to have nerved herself for endurance that day. Throughout all her vexations she remained passive, as if waiting to see what new shape her troubles would assume.

“Grandma, what do you propose now? Do you wish me to go out and bring in the coal, and saw that wood?”

“No, but Clarry can bring the coal to the door, and we’ll trust to chance about the wood.”

“Well! trust on mother. We’ll see presently what your *trust* will bring us. We’ll see! Oh, we’ll see! Ha! ha! ha!” She laughed hysterically as the tears ran down those peach-blossom cheeks. Then she fell again into reverie.

“Come, darling, you go and fill the box, and poor old cripple grandma will take it at the door, and carry it through to the kitchen. See, here are two boxes. We’ll soon have it all in — then we’ll think about the wood.”

She gets a coarse apron with long sleeves, puts it on the child, and ties one around her own waist. The beautiful boy goes out, and commences his labors. Every one who passes stops an instant to look at the lovely little creature, with his sunny curls waving in the frosty air. Some speak to him, but he heeds them not. Presently he stops and thinks a moment. His grandma gives him the box; he

fills it, and says, "Grandma, I am so tired, let me rest a little while."

When the door is closed, he takes from his pocket his golden ball and top, and runs off to a toy-shop.

"Sir, these things were given me a very short time ago, by a good lady, but they are too pretty for *poor me*, now. Will you buy them? Give me a little money for them. Look, my fingers are almost frozen from carrying in coal."

"Why, yes," said the man, "these be nice things. How much do you want or expect to get on them, my boy?"

"I don't know, sir. Whatever you may choose to give."

"Well, here is fifty cents."

The child laid the toys on the counter. They were worth at least a dollar. Then the little fellow ran back to his work.

"Aweel! now Patrick, are ye not ashamed to swindle that 'wee bit bairn,' in that way? Don't ye see, can't ye see by one blink o' your little grey een, that the puir little body is cheated? 'Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us, to see oursels as others see us.'"

"Now, me leddy, you jist go and give him more, if you want to. I've done very well by him, methinks, seeing he's a *stranger*."

"Ah! that's it; but what does the gude God tell ye about the stranger within thy gate?"

This conversation passed between a little Scotch woman and the Irish shop-keeper. She had come to buy some trifle, but her mind being taken up, just then, with the child, she left without making her purchase.

The man shouted after her in rather a loud voice,— "Miss Minny, Miss Minny Dun, come back; I want a word with ye."

"Aweel, some ither time; I'm going doon here to speak to the chiel a bit."

When she arrived at the place, Clarence was working like a Trojan. The tears were forced down his cheeks by

the cold ; still his little heart was not discouraged. Nearly all the coal had been taken in, and his sweet face was so blurred and begrimed with tears and smut, that an intimate friend could not have recognized him.

"Good day to ye, my darling."

The child looked up, but as quickly cast his eyes down, seeming to be ashamed of his employment.

"Oh, now, never mind the work ; it's all right and honorable to do sae ; and never mind the dirt either ; but puir little soul, you let that man up there cheat you. Sorry, sorry fellow that he is ! He didn't give you half the worth o' your pretty toys."

"O, mam ! but I don't mind ; he gave me more than I expected of him. Grandma says that's the way of the world. I am very glad of that much."

"What are you going to do with it, birdie ?" asked the girl affectionately.

"You see that wood there ; well, I am going to get it all sawed up and packed away in the kitchen. I have no ax, and grandmother can't buy one yet. I could chop it up myself, for my sweet mother's and grandmother's sake, if I had the ax." Then he drew himself up to his full hight, looking proudly on the little pile of wood. "You know I love them so much that I love to work for them."

"Aweel, dear, just let me loan you this little piece of money to get it done this time, and when you grow large enough to work, then you will pay me back."

"Oh ! please, Miss, don't make me owe you anything. I do not know whenever I can pay you. Pray don't make me be in debt. Grandma says, 'Owe no man anything but good will.' "

"But, dear, I'm not a man, you see. I'm only a little woman, a poor little shop-keeper. Yet I can spare this sma' sum. Nae doubt I shall want ye many a time to do me a turn. We are neebors, chiel' ; I live just a wee bit further adown the street. Come, keep it."

They call him from the house, and the little Scotch woman passed on, reflecting and turning about in her mind how she can benefit the child and the inmates of the hovel. At a glance she has discovered that there is poverty and suffering within the old moldy walls.

The last box of coal is put away, the apron is taken off, and the child is washed, his pretty hair combed, and every vestige of his recent occupation removed. Some of the new coal is put on, which burns up cheerfully. The old lady has made a clean fireside, and set all things in order. The superb and refined Myra had packed the coal: she could not sit there and see the grandmother limping back and forth with the box.

The child looks weary, and begins to fret. "Mamma, I am so hungry; almost starved, mamma," he cries.

Myra looks at her grandmother, but says nothing.

"Yes, my love, I don't doubt it, but presently we'll have the very nicest little supper you ever sat down to in your life: molasses, sausages, warm loaf, tea, milk." She rubs her hands (this good old lady) in pretended glee, while the child smiles faintly, and hides his little head between his mother's hands.

Another knock at the door.

"I will not open it;" said Myra, "it is only that hateful Irishman, and I have not the money to pay him."

Again the knock — thump, thump, thump.

"I'll see, any how, before they batter down the old door," added the old lady.

The poor mother presses her child to her bosom, and turns her face to the wall in utter helplessness. The child had fallen asleep.

A negro man stands there with a frame and hand-saw. "I'se come, mistis, to saw up dat wood out dar."

"Ah!" sighed she, "how much is it?"

"Two bits, mam."

"Oh! if it's only one cent, I have it not, and this min-

ute I do want the wood to cook supper. Can't you saw it, and wait for the money?"

He scratches his head, and turns his quid of tobacco from one cheek to the other, spits, and looks sheepish. "I would in a minit, Mistis, but my own Mistis 'quires the money of me every night."

He was about to move off, when the little Clarence starts up, rubs his eyes, and going to the door, says,

"Here, grandma, I have money to do everything. Get the uncle there to saw up the wood; then here is more to pay for the hauling, besides enough to buy the hot bread, fresh milk, and all. Now go to work, uncle, I'll settle it."

"I thought so, master; little Miss Minny Dun, down dar, told me to come, and said a little chubbub (cherub), or sompin of dat sort, would pay me. She call little mar-ser, here, all kinds putty names and sweet things. I tell you, honey, you well off on dis airth, if you got good little Miss Minny for your friend."

"What is your name, uncle?" said the child, hanging to his hand.

"Uncle Ned, honey. What's yourn, young Massa?"

"Mine is little Clarry; everybody calls me little Clarry. Now go to work, Uncle Ned, and I will be pay-master. First cut a little bit, and make grandma a nice fire in the stove to cook supper."

This was speedily done. The child goes as usual to the pump for water, the old lady proceeds with her cooking, while Myra sits as usual with a handkerchief over her head. We do not know whether she is weeping, but we do know that she is thinking and sorrowing.

When the man has placed all the wood away in the kitchen, he comes in to get his pay.

"Here, Uncle Ned, but you must sit down and warm yourself, while I bring you your supper. It is very nice; you never tasted anything so good as the sausages. Don't they smell savory, uncle?"

"Well, dey does dat. Dey does smell nice, and dat's de truph ; an' I is hungry. 'Sides, I aint not got no where to stop to git a crumb of nothing till I goes home to-night."

The child had it all fixed on a plate, and getting a bowl of coffee, takes it in to the negro. Then he returns and takes his seat at the foot of the table. He is the master of the *mansion*; he felt that he was, and he looks proudly around and seems quite happy.

The negro having finished his meal, departs. Then the coal-man comes and receives his dues from Clarry's little hand, who is now general purser and *purveyor*.

The sun is making a golden set—the promise of a bright day on the morrow. He looks in, though late, upon the inmates of that hovel; and his evening rays penetrate and light up the somber dwelling.

"Behold that sunbeam, Myra! It has been gloomy, cold, and dark all day. Now at the close, see that glorious sunset. Hail it, my daughter, as a happy augury! Don't you see now, my dear, that our wants have been supplied—all our exigencies met, with little or no effort on our part—almost without our agency! Now, my child, will you still distrust God? Will you not rather cast all your cares on the Saviour?"

Myra spoke not, but wept in silence. This was the only way to reach that lofty spirit—that proud heart. There was no other way to sound the depths, and touch that self-sufficient nature.

"Here, mamma, is still a little more money."

"Where did you get it all, my love?" said the mother, at last drawn from herself and her sorrows, by that sweet prattler.

The little fellow recounts to them very minutely the incidents of the morning. Then that embryo of all truth, honor, and manliness, sinks sweetly to rest on the bosom of his beautiful mother.

CHAPTER VI.

HEART REVEALINGS AND THE "TRUE FRIEND."

"No thought within her bosom stirs,
But wakes some feeling dark and dread;
God keep thee from a doom like hers,
Of living when the hopes are dead."

It is Sunday morning, with a bright, clear atmosphere, and cloudless sky. That invalid old lady rises from her hard, rough bed, calls her children around her, and now sets up in their midst the family altar. She blesses God for existence; returns thanks to him for whatever health she and those dear ones are permitted to enjoy; for strength of body and mind given them for endurance; for that *shelter*; for food and raiment; above all, for redemption and the hope of salvation. Reader, dost thou think they have much reason to thank him? She thinks so (that old lady), for she has the love of Christ in her soul, and firmly believes that all else will be added. She feels no uneasiness, no dread, for perfect love casteth out all fear.

She is now in the midst of her world. She lays one hand on the head of that heart-stricken young mother—that once light-hearted, happy, perhaps worldly-minded, but none the less crushed woman, that deeply-injured *wife*. The other is placed on that of the sweet child by her side. She invokes God's watchful care over them; she pleads for a mitigation of their sorrows, if it pleaseth him; she begs for the gift of the graces of patience, submission, confidence, and faith—such as can move mountains; and

concludes with the invocation for the friendship of Christ, saying, "Give them this, O Father, and it is enough."

Dear old lady ! halt, lame, and almost blind ; with thy unpolished ways, and thy unvarnished tongue, and maybe inflexible nature : but thou meanest well, ever aiming to do right. And God, thanks to his name ! is a discerner of the heart ; and also of the pure gold from the glittering dross. He knows thou art trying to honor him, in thy humble efforts to trim and keep alive thy little rush-light, through all storms and tempests.

When their simple devotions were ended, they betook themselves each to their different avocations. The child again brings the water, while his grandmother prepares the breakfast. His mother, the delicate, fastidious Myra, finds work for those white hands and taper fingers, looking, for all the world, like little pure wax candles, so transparent are they in their whiteness. The feeling common to her while going through these menial details, is that of impatience and loathing. She sometimes flings down the implements of housewifery in disgust and discouragement, and declares that she would rather lie down and die, than to pursue that life of degrading drudgery.

Her grandmother at such times, turns on her a look of grieved remonstrance—not uttering a word of rebuke or even gentle reproof—quietly pursuing her occupation, whatever it may chance to be at the time. But one thing we have noticed : after an ebullition of such feelings, for that day, and the next, and one more, perhaps, provisions are very scarce on that frugal board. Every comfort is lopped off; presently it dwindle^s down almost to nothing, and they sit down to a crust and a glass of water, or maybe a cup of tea, without even the few grains of sugar and drops of milk allotted to each. This silent, unsuspected discipline proves salutary ; and thus matters are adjusted without a word.

There is nothing so chastening to poor human nature,

as hard, stern, necessity. Want and lean, lank hunger will bring people to their senses, and also extract whatever latent strength of character there may be concealed beneath the conventional rubbish of a worldly, superficial education. Splendid suffering will not do it; such as the poor body endures, racked however much by pains, and scorched by fever on a luxurious bed of down. Gilded misery will not, such as sore and lacerated feelings, hid away to rankle in a bruised or broken heart, beating under furs and velvet, and gold and silver trappings. These will not bring down a haughty spirit, or call forth strength of purpose; because this very pride sustains the one, while it enervates the other. Pride of place, pride of birth, pride of person, and pride of wealth will blind its votaries, even in death. But just let nature put in her claims, the cravings and gnawings of the two vultures; and if there are any powers within, see if they do not come forth and stalk abroad to do battle against the enemy, the fell destroyer starvation. Or if not thus fiercely, then witness the windings, the turnings, the devious ways, the artifices, the subterfuges, the leaping over and crawling under obstacles; nay, the cringing and skulking, if needs be, to find the means to appease these yearnings and propitiate the foe.

Myra did her part, when forced thus to contemplate this ghastly picture; but without alacrity, earnestness, or hope. Yet she would not starve—so she worked.

“ My daughter, we must attend God’s sanctuary to-day. This is His day, and we must endeavor to keep it suitably. Therefore we must all go to church.”

“ I can not, grandma! I can not go even to the Lord’s house, to be looked down on by those who are placed above me now, by this downward turn of the wheel of fortune. Besides, I have no seat, consequently no right. Then I will not show myself in these old, faded, tattered, garments; and you should not, if I could prevent it.”

"Oh, child! your troubles have unsettled your mind, and dried up all softness in your nature. Do you think for a moment, that there will be any difficulty in finding a place to worship God, in his own temple?"

"I do not know, but I am not willing to risk it. I will not go there to be gazed at by the heartless puppets who assemble there to act a part."

"Well, I will go, and must take the child as a walking-stick, and see who will insult me, or ask me out. Indeed, I shall feel that I have just as good a right there as any other one of the poor, crawling things on this His foot-stool. I shall take the child, Myra."

"But, grandma, he is so badly dressed; his little toes and elbows are out, and his clothes are old and rusty."

"Never mind all that. Who will know us, child? None will see or care for us in that vast assemblage, save He, the God of glory, who when on earth had not where to lay his head."

They left. Myra sat for a few moments musing deeply. She thought of her altered condition; she felt her isolation there in that fine city; she brooded over her wrongs, her persecutions—but she did not see her own faults. She did not seem to feel that she was weak, and sinful, and needy. Now, as she sat there in that room, there was an expression of injured feelings, wounded pride, great wretchedness, excruciating suffering—but there was no compunction for sin. She did not think she had committed any fault which might have been the moving cause of this overwhelming misery. Perhaps she had not. God knows: we do not. She broods over her condition, her position in the world, until her heart seems to collapse; but her brain grows hot, and feels full. The impulse comes on her to rush away; to flee from the haunts of men; to hide and be at rest.

"Motion—motion I must have—air and motion. Oh! for the power to soar, to take wings, and fly

away from all familiar places. My God! what shall I do? Remain here, and my brain maddens."

She rushes to the door, tugs madly at the old bolt, and flings it wide open. Then she is admonished, by rude, gaping looks, that there is no silence, no seclusion there — no sepulchral gloom, such as her feelings covet, to be found on that thoroughfare.

One person, more impertinent than the rest, approaches her; she slams the door to, in his face, with such force as to shake the whole edifice to its foundation.

"Oh! where shall I go? Where shall I fly, to get away, far away from all, but more particularly from myself. Alas! I have no place. The narrow compass of these walls comprise my world at present, and this only for a short time perhaps, and that by sufferance. Oh! my God! what have I done, thus to deserve thy hot displeasure!"

After rushing across the room a score of times, she stops as if to think, folds her arms, and walks with a slow and measured pace to and fro in that prison-house.

Presently she seats herself before her little work-table, and takes from its drawer a blank-book in which she writes rapidly, and without intermission, for a short time. Then she leans back in her chair, looking pale and worn, as if tired of all things.

"Ah! yes, my dear *journal!* thou art a true friend. I can speak to thee in confidence. Thou dost never prate of the o'erfraught heart, when in its desperation it has entrusted thee with its revealings. From the hour that I first felt myself so aggrieved, I have poured out to thee my plaints. Still thou art very patient; thou dost not tire of my wailings, like other friends. I have confided to thee my most hidden thoughts. See, they have swelled into such a book. Thou hast helped, and still must help me to bridle this untamed nature. For a week past I have had much to humble me; and I thought this turbulent

spirit had been broken. Not so : I find it still as ungovernable, and as hard on the bit as the ‘wild Arab steed.’ My grandmother chides, and exhorts, and prays for me. But she speaks to dull ears ; I can not understand her philosophy. She, dear, single-minded, perhaps deluded old lady, finds out some blessing in everything. She says she can trace the finger of God in all, and believes it will eventuate in good. She quotes texts after texts, which she calls promises ; seems to expect me to embrace and apply them all ; is hurt that I can not see with her eyes, and have faith, or trust, or hope, or something else, all equally a riddle to me.

“ In the school of religion where I was taught—not Christ, but the church, *the high church*—they did not dive so deeply into the subject as my good grandmother does. We skimmed very smoothly and lightly over the surface ; and were in the church because it was reputable to be a member of one of those aristocratic congregations, and also to have a seat in this or that gilded or Gothic structure. She holds strange doctrines, too ; such as ‘ When two or three are met together in the name of Christ, there shall his temple be ; ’ that an altar set up on the hill side, or on the mountain top, or in a cave, or even under a green tree, is equally the sanctuary of the Lord of Hosts. I was not taught this. I only thought of His presence when the organ pealed, the choir chanted, and when his vicegerent thundered his anathemas from the sacred desk, or made the invocation through the Litany. I wish I could feel thus. Alas ! I can not. My thoughts are taken up with my situation, the injustice of this hard decree, which separates me from the world ; the cruelty of man, far more merciless than wild beasts, for they do show some signs of feeling for their offspring. Nor do they always prey upon their own species.

“ But this good old grandmother of mine can see beauties in all things, while to me the deformities are only

obvious. She thanks God day by day for blessings which seem to me to be curses. What want I with existence? What is life to me now? What does it bring me each rising of the sun, but contumely, hardship, want, and a prospect of starvation,—each going down of the same, but a feeling of destitution, a couch watered with tears, sleepless, or if not sleepless, then heavy and dreamless nights."

She gets up and takes her place by the window, and looks out on the passers by, seeming somewhat subdued and calmer. The old rickety door swings open, grating harshly on its rusty hinges. The good grandmother and bright little boy enter.

"Ah! here you are, my hope, my joy, my life!"

The child rushes to his mother, throws two little clinging hands around her neck, and nestles in her lap. Then untwining those supple arms, he places his little hard hands on her peach-blossom cheeks, and draws her down to him, kissing her fondly, as he says, looking timidly at the old lady, "Dear mamma, I'm so glad you did not go to church. A great, big, grand-looking lady, dressed so finely, came storming into the pew, and asked —"

"Hush! hush boy—you must not say ugly things to-day. Let all things appear pretty and peaceful on Sunday. Never mind what passed in the church, there is enough to be thankful for any how. Come, darling, and help grandma to patch up a nice little Sunday dinner. Your mother has been dreaming again. See, she has let the fire go out. Now, my baby, run and get me some water. Presently we shall be as happy as kings and princes; nay, more so, for they always do lack one thing, the one jewel in their crowns is wanting, and the absence of this embitters all else."

Myra is again wrapped in reverie. Something has occurred in the street, or she has seen some one to disturb her tranquillity, a moment ago, and she seems strangely disconcerted and greatly agitated.

CHAPTER VII.

SCENES IN THE SANCTUARY.

“WHAT is a church? Our honest sexton tells,
’Tis a tall building with tower and bells.”

“Where some are thinkin’ on their sins,
And sume upon their claes;
Ane curses feet that fyl’d his shins,
Anither sighs and prays.”

WHEN the old lady and child arrived at the church, and entered the vestibule of one of those stately edifices where the rich and the grand, and the proud, mock God in their attempts to worship him in pomp and state, there were but few persons yet arrived, for the hour was early, and the bells had not yet chimed the last peal. A pursy, beadle-looking man stood there. The old lady divined his office at a glance, for she understood all these things, having been but a short time since a respected member of a more magnificent church than that, and also accustomed to as much opulence as any who essayed to pray there.

The man looked at the coarse, plain dress, the old, crumpled bonnet, and faded shawl; then glanced at the little boy, without cloak or overcoat, standing there shivering (for these very fine churches are oftentimes *cold places*), and made up his mind that they were paupers, who had come to extract the pittance from the rich pew-holders; therefore he pointed over his shoulder with his thumb to a certain corner set apart for such persons. But she turned from him, and walked up the long aisle. Seeing a pew door open, she entered, and with the child takes her seat in the far corner. They dropped on their

knees, and prayed fervently to Him who knows all our wants before we have spoken, but has only promised to give unto those who ask.

The burden of the child's prayer, after he had said, "Our Father," was, "O Lord! bless my beautiful mother and my good grandmother, and my friend, Miss Emma, and the good little Minny, and Uncle Ned; and, O Lord! if it please thee, don't let my grandmother scold my poor dear mother so much; but any how I beseech thee, my kind Father, to bless 'em both. Amen."

Now he rises from his knees, takes his seat by the old lady; but there is a troubled expression on that purely transparent countenance — an uneasy, maybe a slightly alarmed look. He again drops on his knees. At that moment the child was the only kneeling figure in the house. He did not care; he, baby as he was, aimed to please God and not the congregation. In his noble disinterestedness, his almost divine unselfishness, and his anxiety to invoke blessings on his friends, he had failed to implore aid for himself. He had been taught by that old lady — she with the coarse, rough shell enshrining such a sweet kernel — that he could not live properly or happily without God's assistance day by day.

Now that vast assembly kneel. The solemn, dignified successor to the apostolic office is at the altar.

When they are again seated, a haughty, over-dressed, but handsome woman, with a pale, quiet-looking young man at her elbow, comes in, and touching the old lady, signs to her to leave the pew. She does not understand. She never dreamed that such a feeling could have birth in the human breast. What! refuse to a stranger a seat in God's own mansion! She could not suppose such a monstrosity. She hands her the prayer-book, and smiles innocently at the grand lady, who in return scowls down on her, and again motions to her to go out, adding, "I want my seat." The poor old lady rises, and taking the

child by the hand, totters feebly out. Her agitation and her infirmity make her progress down the aisle slow. Ere she reaches the door, she is arrested. A gentleman, whose pew is opposite to that of the lady of such haughty mien, and who has witnessed the whole procedure, now comes out, and darting one glance of keen reproach at her, follows the old woman and child. When he has arrested her attention, by touching her lightly on the arm, he bows respectfully, and begs her to return and take a seat with him; which they do. After showing them in, he follows, sitting down by the child. The service proceeds.

The full, deep-toned organ sends forth its solemn peals, mingling with the rich melody of human voices. The ambassador of Christ again stands at the altar in his sacerdotal robes, and there before him stands that vast congregation of immortal souls, combining all the elements of human nature requisite to make up a world. Who, if endued with omniscience, would dare to look into the hiding-places of those seven hundred human hearts? Methinks it would be a fearful sight—a loathsome spectacle. Alas! who can have the courage to contemplate the workings of his own deceitful and desperately wicked nature.

Here, then, are kneeling, and bowing, and genuflecting, and chanting, and praying, and praising, all responsive to that chaste and beautiful liturgy; as I have said, seven hundred beating hearts, all apparently solemn and grand. How many of them, think you, dear reader, were blameless in the sight of God? [he who reads the heart? Why was that poor old crippled woman required to give up her place? Think you that haughty one had a right to make a distinction? to draw the dividing line there in the temple of the Almighty? Will it be thus before the judgment seat, when the seventh seal shall be opened? What then will be the relative position of these three members of Christ's church?

Now the service is ended, the benediction is pronounced, and the crowd is dispersing. The gentleman stoops down and inquires of the gentle child if he lives in the city.

"Yes, sir. Won't you go home with me and see my mother? I want my dear mamma to help me thank you for your politeness to poor grandma." There was a dew-drop in those sweet, upturned, violet eyes, and a tremulousness in his soft voice.

"Thank you, my little man, it would afford me much pleasure. Where shall we find her?"

"I will show you. Come with me," and he held on to the gentleman's hand.

This little dialogue had been carried on in a low voice, but there was a pair of keen, envious, jealous ears kept wide open to catch each vibration of the music which fell from the innocent lips of that sweet prattler. She noticed that look of admiration on the part of the gentleman; she witnessed with a pang his respectful attentions to that insulted old lady; and then she would have given half of her fine estate if she could have revoked her conduct. She would almost have consented to change places with that lowly, outraged one. Beneath velvet, satin, and furs there beat a heart that day whose every throb was one prolonged agony. She stood still as the little party slowly defiled from the church. She placed herself in the way of this grandly handsome man, who was now as cold and stern to her as she herself had been to the woman. He gave back no look of recognition. His eyes fell on her face as if for the first time.

Now she offers the morning salutation, expecting him to join her—that proud lady. He slightly bows and passes on. The new friends separate themselves from that gay throng, leave the fashionable promenades, and strike off into a less frequented walk. Presently they arrive at the humble dwelling. The gentleman looks greatly surprised; he shakes hands with the little boy, bows to the old lady,

and is about to pass on ; the child clings to his hand and begs him to come in and see his mother. He declines, but promises to call soon.

As he passes the window, there is a face pressed against the glass. He starts violently. It is a face of such super-human beauty that he involuntarily exclaimed, "Surely it is a dream of poetry ! She can not be mortal ! "

A man with a rough bear-skin coat and coarse furs saw that start, and marked the look. Some little distance back there is a haughty but apparently troubled beauty, somewhat in advance of a pale, quiet-looking young man, who sees the start and notes the look. He sees it too ; and the sweet, innocent cause of all this interest sees the start, the sudden halt and drawing up before that old, one-sided, creeling window.

At first she smiled brightly ; then some memory seemed to sweep over her mind, and her face flushed, then paled, as if from deadly sickness. She turns despairingly away from the window, and her head droops on her breast.

Meantime that slight semblance of a man at the side of the proud lady institutes quite a catechism. We know not whether with a view to annoy or entertain. He hazards many comments on the weather, etc., all to as little purpose. She heeds him not ; still hurrying on. The youthful lover smiles sarcastically.

They are now before that old house where they saw the old lady and child disappear. A wicked thrill of exultation ran through her frame as she viewed the premises ; taking in all at a glance. She then marks with a curious eye the old, tattered curtain at the window. Above all, the rude sign over the door fills her heart with delight. "Fashionable Dress-maker, from New York." She points to it, and looking at the young man, laughs scornfully. He is silent.

Now it so turned out that by an irresistible impulse, Myra is again at the window, and when the proud

beauty arrives there, she also stops with a start and sudden halt.

Intense envy, jealous rage, and fiendish hatred are the inmates of her breast. Oh! what commotion and strife are raging there; but all is still and deep, like the hushed storm when garnering its strength ere it descends to do its fell work of destruction. When she arrives at her own mansion, she waves her companion into the parlor, and rushes to her own room.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DINNER PARTY.

"Their various cares in one great point combine
The business of their lives, that is—to dine."

"I own that nothing like good cheer succeeds—
A man's a God whose hogshead freely bleeds ;
Champagne can consecrate the damnedst evil ;
A hungry parasite adores a devil."

WHEN this proud beauty finds herself alone, she flings the door to, with a force which shakes the whole edifice. She now commences tearing off those costly adornments. The gaudy, senseless, trappings of wealth, which are employed as ministers to the Court of Fashion, and are always the faithful insignia of folly. When she is disengaged she throws herself down on the sofa with the utmost abandon, and indulges the following monologue :

" Well ! I have done for myself ! Fool, fool, that I am. It is all over between us now ! I saw it in his look ! 'Twas written on that lofty brow—that nervous upper lip. The icy glance, the freezing manner, told me that he not only resented my conduct to that old wretch, but that he heartily despised me. Oh ! why did I not remember how strange he is about such things ! Then I might have choked down the natural loathing I feel for poverty. I could, to please him, have endured her presence for so short a time. But it never entered my head ; the possibility of such a thing as sitting in my own pew alongside of a beggar ! I was not taught this ; I feel no impulse moving me to it ; I remember no precept or example of

the sort, and the circle in which I move furnishes no precedent. What! who would ever think of such a thing as the mingling of luxurious wealth with squalid misery! I wish he would not hold such crude, obsolete principles: ‘That you must give to paupers in a particular way, with discrimination and delicacy.’ How troublesome and absurd! I take them “*en masse*.” Everybody must know that their hearts are dried up; their sensibilities pinched to a mere speck; and all sensations, save such as are employed to exact, are squeezed out by their mode of life. Still he will talk about the manner and kind words being worth more to mendicants than the real substance.

“Pshaw! he is a fool—a greater one even than I am. I would not have hesitated to give that old hag, and that upstart boy, ten, twenty, or even fifty dollars, had they asked charity of me on —— street—I might even have spared more, had a subscription been handed by *somebody*. Nay, I would have given a hundred to please *him*. But I fear the jig’s up now—I was taken so by surprise—I did not know that the amenities of life were to be extended to old beggar women and little ragged urchins.

“Oh! how proudly disdainful he looked, when he vouchsafed me that one cold glance; and then to follow the old wretch home! I hate her, because I have maltreated her. He is to dine here to-day—I will then try to extenuate my conduct. After all, this may not be so hard to do. Half a million of dollars is a good thick veil, and there are very few persons whose spectacles magnify sufficiently to show faults through it. From under plain, coarse, and tattered garments, small vices peep out; but robes and splendid mantles cover up all sins, even great ones.

“These same robes have done me good service—hiding my faults from others; but *they*, nor vanity, nor self-love, can conceal them from my own mental inspection. When

the mind is *forced* to take cognizance of the heart's workings, and the still small voice within says, 'deeper—deeper—dive deeper—look into, and read what is written there. Self—self—self.' Yet this does not prevent conscience from discharging her duty faithfully—and there is a time when all must listen."

The street-door bell rings. She rises hurriedly, and shaking off those somber feelings, rings impatiently for her maid. When she comes, the lady puts on the same imperial manner with which she had waved the old lady from the pew. The still small voice is hushed now. It is rarely listened to in the crowded halls.

"Ann, have the gentlemen arrived?"

"What say, ma'am?"

She raves at her—"I say have the gentleman come yet? You stupid dolt, why don't you answer? Have any of the gentlemen come yet?"

"Oh, oh. No—no, ma'am, not yit—only Mr. Gaines, what *followed* you from the church."

The bell rings again.

"Look, Ann," said the beauty, very calmly, for she would have considered that it was compromising herself to show the least bit of feeling, save anger, before a servant.

The girl returns, saying, "It aint nobody but Mrs. Calderwood and her set."

"Well, come help me to dress, Ann," said the lady, with a weary, disappointed look. "It is very early; I wonder why these people have forestalled the hour of dining. It is quite annoying, and a great liberty to take."

"Now, Miss Guttrude, you know this ain't not one of the grand days for grand dinner parties. 'Taint one of the reg'lar fine times what we haves sometimes. This is only Sunday, and they don't care much what they do here on a Sunday. We can't make no great *have-to-do* on the Sabbath, you know."

The bell rings, rings, rings—the lady seems slightly flurried; which the negro marks down in *her* tablets.

"Go see again, Ann."

But before the maid can obey her imperial mistress, there is a rap at the door. A footman enters, bowing.

"Maj. Lindsay send he compliments to you, ma'am, and beg you will do him de favor to give him de pleasure of your company in the drawing-room, where all the ladies and gemmen 'sembed, waiting the presence of the queen ob the 'casion."

She takes no notice of this set speech, meant to be facetious.

"Has Col. Murray come in yet, boy?"

"No, ma'am, the Kernel aint come in yit; but we 'spect him the very next pull."

"Tell my father, Robert, that I am not quite ready—will soon join him."

The negro stares at her, seeing that her toilette is completed, and she is looking particularly elegant.

Now there is another message from Major Lindsay, which forces the lady to appear among the guests, whom she greets cordially (although that day she hates them every one), and then goes through the intricate conventionalities in the most unexceptionable manner.

She smiles, too; and you can not discover on that smooth surface anything to denote the troubled under-current. Only sometimes a sudden raising of the eyes and a quiet turning toward the door as it opened to admit guest after guest on that Sunday afternoon. There is no nervous starting, no piercing glance, as if she would rend the oaken pannels ere they have time to swing on their smooth hinges. She plays the *well-bred* lady to the same kind of audience; according to their own code of good breeding and etiquette—which is a constitution of forms without feeling, words without meaning, and show without substance.

But he comes not! Mr. Gaines, our quondam acquaintance, hands this pet of society to the head of the splendid board. When there, she acquits herself in the most approved manner. He comes not! and there is darkness in her soul, but no shadow on her brow. Meantime they chatter on, laugh, discourse politics, literature, fashions, the drama; some Garrick or Kemble in embryo; some ephemeral poet, or rather poetaster; then religion—Oh no, not religion, but the church, the minister, the sermon, the congregation, etc.

Miss Lindsay is inquired of about the sermon; the question is repeated; she looks up, and tries to recover herself; her thoughts are wandering, they are with *him*, for still “he comes not.” She has not heard one word of the conversation. She did not hear that discourse from the pulpit, yet she replies to the question,

“Oh! very well, indeed.”

“Daughter, what was the text?” says Major Lindsay.

She looks to her friend on the left, saying, “My father is so primitive and tiresome. Who cares or thinks about the text.”

That father is not to be silenced, for he is a *Lindsay*, and a Scotchman. He repeats the question, slightly frowning. “I say, Gertrude, what was the text?”

Now that proud eye quails before the stern, rigid, Scotch brow, and she answers deprecatingly, “I do not know, papa; I have forgotten. I don’t think he stuck to his text.”

“You mean, you did not take to it, Gertrude. That’s about it.”

The lady bit her lip, fiercely. She knew that she always found her match in her father, at whatever game they played. Lindsay pitted against Lindsay; “Then comes the tug of war.”

“I do not think it matters much, Miss Lindsay, whether you listened or not. He was decidedly personal; and all

sensible people must pronounce that to be in very bad taste," rejoined Mr. Gaines.

"How so?" inquired some one.

"Well, I rather think so. He talked, you know, so much against the rich and high, in this world, that one would almost conclude, that it was a sin to be either one or the other. Then he said, poor beggars here, were to inherit the kingdom. In conclusion, he launched out into a long tirade about Dives and Lazarus, and a great deal more which I have forgotten—but I know I thought him very personal."

He stopped suddenly, having received *the* look which said "hush, you have talked enough." No worshiper of nature ever studied her face more assiduously, in order to learn the presage of the weather, than did this youth the countenance of his mistress, that he might discern the symptoms of the coming storm. Now he sees a little cloud in the distance, "Not larger than a man's hand;" but it is there gathering, gathering! He feels he must abide it, for it will surely break over his devoted head, ere long.

Major Lindsay is quick-sighted. He sees that Gaines is discomfited. "What is it, Gertrude? What does he mean?" said he.

"Oh, I don't know, father; I heard nothing of the sort," said she.

It happened that Dr. Mercer had chosen for his subject that day, this short but pithy text, "Grind not the faces of the poor." In the portraiture of character, and the delineation of certain features, he did seem to describe the prominent traits belonging to our haughty beauty. And Mr. Gaines had made the application with great justice. The doctor had witnessed the dumb show enacted in the pew of the aristocratic lady—for millionaires do occupy high seats in the *church*, as well as in the synagogue, and their actions are scanned. The good minister being armed with the sword of the spirit, did lay on manfully;

he generally wielded this weapon with great strength. But to-day his thrusts are deep. It is also true, that Master Shallow, in the person of Mr. Josiah Gaines, had suffered himself to be taken captive (at least his attention), and so he concluded that the person in the sacred desk had aimed those blows at his *divinity*.

"What was the text?" again asked the major, with a merry twinkle in his eye. "Come, Mrs. Calderwood; speak, madam."

"Pray, do not ask me; I was too busy watching a scene which was being enacted just before me. I could see nor hear nothing else."

"What was it, Miss Emma?" said the jovial host, rubbing his hands.

"Indeed, Major Lindsay, I have forgotten. I did hear it, and thought I would mark it down in my memory, well knowing that you would call on me at dinner as usual; but indeed, sir, my attention was so taken up with that beautiful boy in the next pew ——"

"What was it, Calderwood?"

"Ah! friend Lindsay, you are too hard for me now. In truth I did not hear it. I was watching Murray, as he played the agreeable to an old beggar, whom he had gathered somewhere from the hedges and highways."

The major continued thus to interrogate them, his merry mood increasing with each one's discomfiture, until he rubs his hands together, and laughs with great glee.

"Well, upon my word, you pay our good divine a high compliment. Each one of you seems to have had something else before you more interesting than the preacher and his subject."

He now turns, still chuckling, to Mrs. Green.

"I will not ask you, madam, because I think I know what takes you to church, and what you always have before you. But suffer me to pass on to my gentle friend, your daughter. Miss Mary, what did you see right before

you, to take your mind off the text? Was it Mrs. Calderwood's scene, or Miss Emma's cherub, or Murray's playing Don Quixotte to Calderwood's pauper, or the grandly handsome colonel, himself, or poor old Doctor Mercer's bald head?"

"All, sir," replied Mary Green, blushing.

"All? Then of course you did not hear the text."

"No: no, of course not," shouted the younger members of the company.

"Ah!" cried Emma, exultingly; "Mary is defaulter, at last."

"You are all mistaken," added she, while a beautiful carnation overspread her face, "I did hear."

"Then let *us* hear," exclaimed the company. She is silent, and her lids droop over those plaintive blue eyes.

Her mother looks encouragingly at her. "Speak, my love. Never be backward to raise your voice in such a cause."

When this little stream of polite mirthfulness has run its course, she looks up modestly, and says, "You are all mistaken; I do know. I both heard and understood, and now I remember—but I take no praise to myself for this, Major, as there was really nothing to distract *my* attention." She then repeated the text, chapter, and verse.

The major, seeing the company look blank, and understanding that there might now ensue an awkward silence, added, "But from your own confession, we believe that you saw all these things. Come, tell me how you managed to escape their influence. But first recount to me all about this Sunday drama. Indeed, I should like very much to hear a version of it, from each member of the board. I only premise that you shall be sworn as usual, to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

This was unanimously agreed to; and Mrs. Calderwood being the first lady on the right, is first called on.

"I had taken my seat," says the lady, "after getting through with the first prayers, when there comes hobbling up the aisle, a miserable, mean, hag-looking, old woman, and takes her seat in ——"

A violent pressure on the toe causes her to stop, and look up at the beautiful hostess ; she meets that glance which, like an electric shock, is felt and understood. Then all is again bland and smiling ; but the eyes smile only ; the rich vermillion lips are compressed so tightly between those pearly teeth, that presently, when she is compelled to open them to reply to Mrs. Calderwood's "Did you speak to me, Miss Lindsay ?" they are covered with blood. And now the lips essay to wreath themselves into a like expression.

Mrs. C. has taken the hint, and not a word about the *pew* escapes her ; she only adds, "She was an impertinent, and hateful-looking old wretch."

Emma looked around as she exclaimed, "Oh ! mamma, don't say that ; she made no such impression on me. I only noticed how hurt she looked when she was told ——" a pinch on the arm arrests her, and she ended by saying, curtly enough, "I mean, I was so engrossed with the beautiful boy."

"Now, Mrs. Green, we will take your deposition."

"I did not see anything of all this. I saw no beggar so loathsome, nor boy so supernaturally beautiful."

"Miss Mary, Miss Mary, we want your testimony. What did you see ?"

"I saw what our friends here have deposed to ; besides, I saw, as you say, Doctor Mercer's bald head and my prayer book, which I think they did not see. Then I saw a pale, feeble-looking old lady and a sweet child get up, as if they would leave the church, and walk down the long aisle. The old lady tottered, and leaned on the shoulder of the bright, beautiful boy, as if scarce able to stand without this little support. Then I saw Colonel Murray

follow, and having overtaken them, he bows to the old lady as if she had been Victoria or Miss Lindsay. After which, they all returned together, and were seated in the colonel's pew, where they sat quite still, seeming to be wholly engrossed with the service, and afterward absorbed in the sermon. Then I ——”

“That will do, my dear. Major Lindsay only wants to see how differently different persons see the same objects. Yes, and now I insist on hearing what you yourself saw.”

“Well, to begin, I did not see any old hag hobbling up the aisle; nor did I see anywhere in that house any one resembling a pauper. All these *novelties* in Doctor Mercer's church I missed. But I saw a plainly dressed, but strictly decent old lady. True, her shawl was faded, and her bonnet seemed to have been made acquainted with narrow places. But her countenance was placid, and revealed, no doubt, what her heart felt, religion and love to Christ. No one can look abject to my eyes, who bears that seal.”

“Whose pew did she leave?” asked Lindsay

No reply.

It is repeated.

Silence still. The red spot is on the proud lady's cheek, and her pearly teeth are again discolored with a deeper hue.

A servant hands his master a note, which he reads aloud:

“Col. Murray hopes his friend, Maj. Lindsay, will excuse his absence from his hospitable board to-day. Unforeseen circumstances cause his non-attendance. Accept his regrets.

Respectfully,

C. C. MURRAY.”

“Well, this is as cool as the day, and as short as your pie-crust, Gertrude. Did you see and speak with him to-day, daughter?”

“No, sir; I spoke to him, the morning salutations merely, in passing.”

"Come, pass the wine, Gaines. Ladies, here is hoping we may have the pleasure of passing together many more such Sundays." Gertrude quietly sets down the glass, the wine untasted.

They now adjourn to the drawing-room ; as the gentlemen are not invited to linger over their cups ; this making the only difference between *that* and other festive days.

Maj. Lindsay is a Scotchman by birth, and left Edinburgh when a mere youth. He seems to have lost all recollection of the Presbyterian mode of Sabbath-keeping there. His sojourn in the United States, and his residence principally in Southern cities, had obliterated all fervent love for *kirk* ; and now he and his family show themselves once on every Sunday at *church* ; then go home and pass the day as above described. He has many of the national traits of the Scot ; is rather cold and somewhat stern ; unbending and unflinching where duty is recognized, destitute of all vanity, somewhat selfish, has that sort of pride which places him above the possibility of doing a mean or a little action. He might be moved to commit a crime on a grand scale — at least there are circumstances which would extenuate a great fault — but never a petty one. He could not pardon a mean act or a petty cruelty. He would also have gone to the stake for religion or conscience sake, provided there was a showing of magnanimity or sublimity in the action. But he knew nothing of those quiet virtues which win their way and are always ready for use. He only felt the impulse to practice such as walked abroad at noonday. Still he was immeasurably better than his beautiful daughter, even in such graces as should adorn the female character. Hence the dread the lady felt to have her conduct known to her father.

The company now all dispersed to their respective places of abode, where we will presently pay each one a visit after they have taken off their masks.

CHAPTER IX.

DIVERS SCENES IN SUNDRY PLACES.

“ O, MANY a shaft at random sent,
Finds mark the archer never meant;
And many a word at random spoken,
May soothe or bruise the heart that’s broken.”

THREE persons are sitting together in a handsome and comfortable parlor, the hour being nine o’clock, P. M.: an exceedingly handsome man, a sweet Hebe-looking child, and a precise, rather fantastic lady, somewhat passed middle age, of medium size, and possessing traces of rare beauty even at the present time. This lady is dressed in the hight of the fashion, with great care and some taste. The clever ones have reported her to be sixty or more, but this evening she is looking about forty years old. Yet she is the true mother of that magnificently dark and grandly handsome man, and the grandmother of the pretty sylph-like creature, Genevieve Murray. The child is sitting on her father’s knee, with one little, plump, white arm twined around his neck, while with the other dimpled, baby hand she is playing with those rich clustering curls as black as the sloe; ever and anon burying the same little rosy tips in his luxuriant whiskers and moustache. Sweet prattler.

“ Papa, why don’t you look at me sometimes? Aint I as pretty as the fire? Look at me, papa, pray do, instead of always watching the red hot coals. I wonder that terrible blazing fire don’t melt your eyes, papa. Tivvy says when we die, that we’ve all got to lie down in a hot bed of coals for awhile. Oh! papa, aint that scary?”

He heeds not that sweet little mouth, as it lisps out those words ; his mind seems to be closed, and thought has given place to memory—the mind's mirror, wherein sometimes fearful things are reflected. See how that fine face is marred, look how those perfectly defined arches are contracted, how that smooth and expansive forehead is corrugated with lines drawn in it by intensified feeling.

The lady across the table is reading (or seeming to) by a splendid burner, whose light is brought down to her through a handsome gilt tube. She asserts herself to be *near*, or short sighted. Ha ! ha ! ha ! that's the way when ladies arrive at a certain age, or no age ; they are apt to grow short-sighted. A costly eye-glass, depending from a Maltese chain of exquisite workmanship, is held to her eyes. She seems to experience a sort of unrest, which induces a constant looking away from her book, to gaze on her son, who still sits there with the little girl in his arms, sunk in reverie.

A servant enters and hands him a letter. He puts down the child, approaches the table, and reads it. Now a still darker and more lowering cloud o'erspreads his face.

"Murray, why did you not dine with Major Lindsay, on last Sunday, as usual ?" says his mother, looking sharply at him.

"I could not, madam," answered the son, with a very freezing look.

The mother knew there was no appeal from that look. All the avenues of information were then closed.

He rings the bell, and when his servant appears, orders his cloak, cane, and cap. When he has received them from the boy he leaves the house.

Major Lindsay throws down his newspaper, as Ann, the lady's maid enters.

"Ask your young mistress to do me the favor to come down. I am waiting to see her."

The girl hesitates, and the major, stamping his foot, rips out a heathenish sort of oath, and bids her begone.

In the meantime, he walks up and down that large room, muttering to himself, "I had well nigh forgotten; I must find out what all this talk is about. A feeble old woman being turned out of a pew. I thought Gertrude evinced some feeling; a great deal for her, even through that iron mask which she puts on sometimes, when she wishes to conceal what she is thinking about—what wrong she has been perpetrating against some poor body. But I trust no daughter of mine could have been guilty of this exercise of petty power. Confusion seize me! but I could not forgive this mean arrogance, because of fortuitous advantage over the feeble and indigent. Aye, yes, I remember; Murray failed to escort her to church, and did not call on Saturday evening. Disappointments never fail to rouse the tiger in her naturally savage nature. Well! she can't help it—nature is nature, after all your training; and she inherits the worst qualities of both father and mother. What could be expected from the issue of such a marriage. A true Scot, driven by his desperate fortunes to woo and wed an English heiress, who, on her part, marries for social position; neither of us having chosen the other, at least as far as the election of the heart tells. The simple truth of the business is this: the poor child was born too soon after our disenchantment; when those great scales had but just fallen from our eyes, and we were forced to contemplate each other after the masks were laid aside—to view our real and secret natures. I must bear with her. Many of her faults are by entail; she can not part with them if she would."

The girl returns; the major meeting her at the door, frowning. Ann stammers out,

"Sir, Miss Guttrude say, she hope you will 'scuse her dis evenin', for she aint not well. She say, she feel much predisposed, and her head gwine to 'vide right into two halfs."

He passes on with the same measured tread; adding, "It is better so; all right. Girl, tell your mistress, good night, and adieu. We had better not meet to night, that's clear. I will talk it over with her to-morrow, perhaps."

It is nine o'clock, a. m. Sweet Mary Green is occupied as all sweet Marys, who have ever lived, would like to be. She is seated in their small, neat, plain parlor, the surroundings of which give promise of ease and comfort only.

A young man of pleasing appearance, and debonair address, is by her side. They have been conversing for a long time in a soft, low tone of voice, not louder than the gentle ripple of the still waters, when stirred by the light evening breeze. He presses her taper fingers, which sends the subtle fluid through every avenue to the heart; and with eyes and lips is pleading his cause. Sweet Mary Green blushes, and is silent. I believe, in such matters not to dissent is to assent. Is it not so, my young lady reader?

Now, all such interviews are only interesting and precious to the parties concerned. We will therefore close our ears to their plaintive murmurings, the soft rustlings of the boy-god's wings.

In the same neighborhood, the same hour, and self-same moment, the following dialogue is going on :

"Well, papa, I confess I did recognize the child, and the old lady, too; but somehow I felt unwilling to have them brought forward, there at that table, to be carved up, as I knew they would be, if the company had known that they were the inmates of the hovel, and related to that charming, delectable, superhumanly elegant, transcendently beautiful young woman. O papa! if you could only have seen her yesterday, when she smiled on me. I was electrified. I can think of no similitude in all nature by which I can place her before you. There is not a flower that will do. Roses, and peach-blossoms, and moonlight, and sunbeams, and dewdrops, and diamonds, and pearls, and everything else, combined and amalgamated into one blaze of glory, could not, I know, papa, convey to you the same impression as did that radiant smile to me—that one gleam of hope, as it struggled its way up, from the poor, stricken heart, to the face of divine beauty."

"I should think not, daughter; for all those beautiful and bright things thrown pell-mell, and as you say, blent into one, would form an unseemly mass. But when will you take me to see this nonpareil of a woman?"

"Sometime soon, I hope, sir; but she has never told me. When I urge it now, she only smiles sadly and says, 'My drawing-rooms are not quite ready. When they are in order to receive stylish, fashionable visitors, I will let you know;' and so she puts me off from time to time."

"S'death! but that's tempting. I like a thing of that sort. Gods! how it inflames a fellow—that sort of quaint chariness!"

"What did you say, papa? I do not understand you. What is it, sir?"

"God forbid you should, (aside). Oh, nothing, daughter, go on. What else?"

"Nothing else, sir, I had ceased speaking."

"Well, I don't think mamma ever surmised who they were."

"Certainly not; had she done so, that house would not have held her, and then she would have given me h— as soon as we reached home." Emma put her hand over her father's mouth.

"Come, papa, I do not want any flowers of rhetoric to-night. Listen, hist! hist! let us do so for our own edification, papa."

"My dear Jones, did you notice that look of Miss Lindsay when her father read the note from that cold, haughty, hateful Colonel Murray?"

"I guess I did; and Mis Callerwood, did you see how she bit her lips, and turned pale, then red, then white again?"

"You better believe I saw it all, and more, too."

"Do tell!" rejoined Miss Nancy, unable to sit still, so keen was becoming her enjoyment of the subject.

"Do you think, Jones, that they'll ever be married?"

"Who, ma'am?"

"Pshaw! I thought you understood; we were talking about Miss Lindsay and Colonel Murray."

"Oh, true! but the Lord knows I don't. But they do say—"

"Oh hush, Jones; don't keep telling me what they do say—tell me what you know."

"Do tell! I never see sich a woman. She'll ask ten thousand questions, but if you jest take up time to response to one, she'll fly off the *helm*."

"Come, Jones, don't be a fool; you know I have been your friend through thick and thin, so put up."

"I always do put up. I've put up with everything till I can't stand it no longer. Next you'll be telling me to put out, and I'll be sure to do it; so I will."

Miss Nancy had wrought herself into a towering pas-

sion. Her little twinkling, coal-black eyes snapped; her lips, which were always white, just then became blue, and she involuntarily clenched her teeth and her fists; but when she saw Mrs. Calderwood bridle up, and set her head on one side, closing the opposite eye, she knew then the time had come; and if she did not speedily recant, the game would be up.

"Well, Miss Jones, I wonder who would be looser thereby? I want you to decide that case, and inform me speedily," and her *big*, pale, blue eyes *glared*—they never could flash, you know.

"God bless my dear Mis Callerwood. Why I was just a-joking. I havn't no idea of doing nothing at all in the wide, wide, world," said the toady, in an humble, fawning voice. Seeing that the lady was not yet propitiated, and fearing that her *feline* propensities were being roused (for she rapidly passed her thumb over the end of every finger-nail as if feeling their pointedness and potency), she adds hurriedly, with feigned showing of importance and mystery,

"But Callerwood, I believe I never told you. No, I swore I would lock it all up in my bosom of bosoms, and then throw away the key."

"What! what is it, Jones?" (A laugh from the husband.)

Every vestige of anger had now disappeared,—all swallowed up in her insatiable love of gossip and desire to hear scandal.

"Come now, Jones?" and she laid her arm around her scraggy neck caressingly.

"Can't do it, Mis Callerwood. I reckon I hadn't ought to; I'm bound up so tight."

"Humph! God knows you look like it, you d—d old mummy, you!" exclaimed Calderwood, and Emma again places her hand on his mouth.

"Well, Jones, *I'm bound*, too, to hear that."

"How! you don't say so? Then I reckon we may's well just talk it all over together."

"Well, I think so, Jones."

"I had been way down to the t'other eend of Chesnut, to see again about getting that skuirt quilted."

"Oh! the fiends take the skirt; go on."

"Well, Mis Callerwood, who told you, any how?"

"Go on, Jones," says Mrs. Calderwood, now trembling with eagerness.

"As I was a saying, I went down to the fur end of Chesnut to get that sku —"

"Confound Chesnut and that old petticoat too! Jones, I will not talk to you, if you don't stick more to the text."

"Why, what is the text, Mis Callerwood?" An impatient wave of the hand, a sudden starting to the floor, and a very lady-like stamping of the foot, brings poor old Miss Nancy back to the point, and reseats her, for she had been raised quite out of her chair by that little whirlwind. As meekly now as a martyr she relates, while the lady as greedily drinks in, the poison.

"Well, as I was coming back, I calls to see Moggy Ann Carns. I wanted to git her to —" Another frown from Mrs. C. "'Well,' says Moggy Ann, 'Miss Jones, did you hear what a quarrel Gertrude Lindsay and Colonel Murray has had?' 'No, dear,' says I, 'I haint heerd a word on the subject. What is it, dear Moggy?' 'Oh,' says she, 'I'm afeard to tell ye, I swore on the *kiver* of the Bible. You see the leaves was all burnt up long ago, 'cause Tom Truman, my last sweetheart, went and examined the family record, and seen our ages; so sister burnt up all the in'ards of the book, but for myself, I didn't —'"

"Fool!" exclaimed Mrs. C. with an uncontrollable burst of impatient rage.

Miss Nancy folded her arms, and, with Moses-like meekness went on —

"Well, as I was saying, she said she was swore on the

kids of the Bible, that she wouldn't tell nobody, and then she sorter swore me, but as you've been bound up too, jist like myself, we'll talk it over together."

"Go on!" now screamed Mrs. Calderwood, almost beside herself.

"Ann, Gertrude's maid, come t'other day for that blue satin dress, and when she got it, she kept a kind o' lingering and loitering like. So it struck me she had something on her mind. 'Ann,' says I, 'when is your mistress going to get married?'

"Well, now, Miss Moggy, dat's more 'an dis nigger is able to say jest now. I begin to think never.' Then she comes close up to Moggy and whispers, 'Dat Colonel Murray don't love Miss Guttrude; he neber did, and neber will; dat's de way to tell it. You remembers las' Sunday, don't you, Miss Moggy? Well, did you know dat ev'ry Sabbath day, de Lord's good day, we has dinner party at our house? and de 'mestics and waiters can't get to go to de *Mefodist chaplain* to hear dat dear, miserable-looking man perclaim de glad tidings of great joy, what you'd never think was glad tidings, he say 'em so mournful like.'

"'Go on, Ann, that's a good girl,' says Moggy.

"Well, dat last dinner, 'most a week ago, after all de comp'ny leaved, I was in de back parlor, and dey in de front. I kept as still as any hoppergrass, so dat I might listen good. I hear Miss Guttrude say, in a low and trimbly voice, "Murray, what has come over you? You is so cold and distantful to me of late?" Den de colonel get up, and say he must withdraw.'

"But first, what did he say?" eagerly inquired Moggy.

"He spoked not a word, but like a dumb brute before de shearers, he jis opened his lips.'

"Then what did he say?" reiterated Moggy Ann.

"Why, didn't I tell you, he speaked not a word.'

"But you said he opened his lips, didn't you?"

"'Lor'! no I didn't; I said the dumb beast 'fore de shearers opened dar lips. O mercy! O mercy! How ignorous white folks is, any how. Dey hardly eve does know de word o' God.'

"'Go on, Ann,' says Moggy, for, like you, Mis Callerwood, she was anxious to git to the sequence.

"'Well, den she take his hand, and she look up in he whiskers and sigh, and groan, and say, weeping, "Oh! monda-Dieu! I has live one day too long! Conrad, you don't love me! What has I did, that you is so much estranged away from me?!"'

"'Then what? Do pray, go on, Ann,' said Moggy Ann.

"'He git right up, and say he must retire. So he takes her hand, and say good-night. But presently he stoop down and kiss her one, two, tree times. Den he face flush up, and he eyes blaze, and de big veins swell so in he forehead dat dey look like young ropes; and I swear to you, Miss Moggy Ann, I thought Miss Gutty was gwine to die of gladness. Ah! but, Miss Moggy Ann, white man mighty unsartain. Dey aint constant and true in dar loves; and dat I do know for myself, nigger as I is.'

"'Well, what then? what followed?' said Moggy.

"'Why, nothing didn't follow. Dat de last time she ever see him. Ah! I tell you, white man is so slippery and so full of dissemabilation. Miss Gutty 'spect him to come to go with her to church, accordin' to pintment, but s-h-e w-a-i-t! s-h-e w-a-i-t! After awhile he come not at all, and she go off by herself wid Mr. Gaines; but she d-a-t mad! Whew! how mad she was. I hear no more. But I got my eye and my ear open.' 'And mouth too, said Moggy,' parenthetically.

"'Go on, Ann dear! What comes next?'

"'Oh, nothing did'nt come next; dey did'nt have no next. But, from what I hear, Miss Gutty made him mad. Sompin 'bout an old beggar 'oman at church.'

"'So he didn't come that afternoon,' says Moggy.

"'No, m-a-m, he didn't; nor that night; nor never since. In fact, he haint come yit, and I don't believe he's ever gwine to come agin.'

"'Oh,' says, Moggy (who is very tender hearted), 'that is too cruel. How does she stand it, Ann?'

"'Well! she never do tell her grief nor her love; but jis lets it, like a worm in de core of an apple, feed on her damaged cheek, and sits dar, while a green an' sickly melancholy does her dat way, as "*Will Hatspear*" says.' (Ann was a constant attendant at the theater, and a special admirer of the divine Shakspeare.)

"'Is that all?'

"'Not quite. She writ a letter to him the other night. De letter was blistered wid bitter, salt tears. She give it to me, 'cause she know she can *trus'* me. She tell me to hang about the door till he come out, and then follow him, and bring him to her, if I wants my poor young mistis to live. But—God bress your soul, Miss Moggy—I stand dar till I can't keep my limbs from chattering and my teeth from quaking wid cold. Presently he come out, all muffled up so, dat de Devil himself wouldn't know him. But instead of taking de street to our house, he strike down nine or ten squares. I all dat time creep 'long behind him. After awhile he stop before a little *m-e-a-n*-looking house; den he walk up and down many times; after which, he plant hisself before the lamp-post, and look like he gazing into the old window. Just den de Watch comes 'long, and seize hold o' me: but I knows dat man; so I shows him my face; den he cuss me, and ax me what Devil's arrand I on now. I pint to Col. Murray—and burst out into a loud whisperin giggle; and when Murdoch sees what I pint at, he says—"Yes, d—him, he's there again, is he?" So I broke off and run'd home—and found Miss Gutty dressed, sitting up waiting for de Col.—he! he! he! And dat's all.'

"Oh! Lors a mercy! I've been here four hours. Miss Guttrude 'll kill me! Miss Moggy——'

"Oh, never fear Ann; you know too many of her secrets. You might do just what you have a mind to. If you'll manage your cards right, you can git your freedom."

"Oh, I don't want dat. I'm a thousand times better off dan any free nigger, and a million of times more 'spectable. And now, Miss Moggy you must take a solemn oaph on de Bible.'

"Oh, never mind, Ann, I'm not going to betray your confidence."

"Git de Bible, else I won't tell you what passed sence, betwixt Miss Guttrude and dat traitorsome colonel."

"So that made Moggy get them lids of the Bible, and Ann put her through the oath, thinking it was a valid oath, and a sure-'nough book."

"Well, what more, Jones?"

"Not another word would Ann utter, but broke right off, notwithstanding Moggy coaxed her, and offered to pay her."

Mrs. Calderwood drew a long breath, for so intensified had been her enjoyment, so rapt her attention, that she had not ventured to respire freely, lest she should interrupt that which by long indulgence had become the alienment of her nature.

"Well, now I declare, Jones, this is something worth listening to."

"I think, Jones, it is the most remarkable thing of the age, how that old, patched-up, pasted over, braided, and painted up mother of his has so got the upper hand of that cold, stern, proud man. She winds him up like a watch or a clock, they tell me."

"Yes, Mis Callerwood, but *they do say* that that old woman possesses some charms or conjurations; any how, some sort o' subtly arts; for they tell me—I don't know

nothing about it myself—but they say that she always carries her pint, and that she can coax or scold, or scare that nasty, arrogant, hateful man into, or out of, any plan or prospect of his life whenever she pleases. And she, too, the oldest, the ugliest, and madest up creature that ever I saw."

Then they both laughed a little, mean, sniggering laugh, and "d—— em" was heard from across the way.

"Papa, did you ever hear or see anything like the gusto with which mamma and Miss Nancy have served up everybody's reputation to-night?"

"Yes, my love, and their appetites are growing keener every hour."

"But, papa, why use such ugly, profane language before your little daughter? I'll bet you my diamond ring that when I take you to see my glorious Grecian statue, you will never think of devil, or damnation either, in her presence."

"Emma, I love you more than all the world besides, and I never mean to wound or maltreat you; but, d—— child, here at home, where your mother and that old 'are, I always find something suggestive of those . . . Perhaps if I were there, I should only think of fairies, and goddesses, and Cupid's court."

"You would think, papa, of angels and seraphims, and good spirits. I think one unholy thought or desire would desecrate the place;" and she looked plaintively and inquiringly into his face.

"Dear child, you are a sweet, bewitching, innocent little fool," and he kissed her fervently and left.

CHAPTER X.

NATURE'S NOBLEMAN.

"HE was not born to shame;
Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit;
For 'tis a throne where honor may be crowned
Sole monarch of the universal earth."

"Love is a passion which kindles honor into noble acts."

AT the same hour, in a plain, neat little room, back of a little variety store, seated in a little old arm chair, is a little old lady. The little old lady is very aged; her hair, which is milk white, is combed smoothly over her wrinkled brow, and worn under a prim Quaker cap. A little table is by her side, on which is a snow-white cover and a napkin, a fine China plate, cup and saucer, wine-glass, knife, and silver fork.

A rather quaint, quiet-looking little woman, attired in a brown merino dress, a collar of fine linen, white as her teeth, with cuffs to suit, is in attendance. This little *young* lady is not pretty, as we behold her just then, but she is good, Oh, how good!

"Aweel! aweel! my bonny bairn, ye dinna ken, and maybe ye dinna care, how lang and wearily the time drags wi' me. Ye gang your gaits, but ye leave the puir auld body here to greet and glower all alone by my ain sel'. Lang, Oh, too lang it is, before I can lay me down and dee."

"Ah! now, grannie, niver fash, and it'll be gude when it comes. Aweel! and it's nae sae lang either since ye tasted o' the gude things frae God's store-house."

Then she placed on that little table the nicest plate of oysters and crackers, fills the China cup with aromatic tea, and pours into the glass a spoonful of good port wine. It is all on the table, every morsel that the house contained that night. The old lady eats with a morbid appetite, while with the garrulousness and querulousness of extreme old age, she grumbles all the time. But that dear little embodiment of patience and fortitude never retorts. Then, when all is consumed, every oyster and every cracker, and there is nothing left for the pious, lovely, self-sacrificing little Minny Dun, she with a smothered sigh pours out a cup of tea, and drinks it without the amelioration of sugar or cream. Still with a thankful heart, a contented mind, and an humble spirit, she says, mentally, "I have lost my thrift, somehow, I dinna ken half my time what I am about. But I will provide better next week."

That good creature retired presently with the pangs of hunger at work; but she did not the less pour out her soul in gratitude to God. Peace be with thee, and angels watch over thee and thy aged, exacting parent; and may God bless thee, thou gentle, affectionate little Minny Dun.

In another part of the city, quite remote from this, there are four or five men seated over a fire in a mean, dirty-looking room. The atmosphere is reeking with the rank odor of spilt liquor and tobacco smoke.

A dark, but very handsome man gets up, puts on his overcoat, which is bear-skin, buttons it up to his chin, dons a cap of the same material, takes his club of office, and leaves the room, the rest following him.

The first man separates himself from the others, and walks on hurriedly until he gets opposite to a stately mansion, from the windows of which brilliant lights are streaming. He stops, looks at the house, and mutters to

himself, "Well, *he* can't help it, and I can't help it either. I curse myself every hour in the day. But why do this? I am not to blame. All are attracted, even as I was. Who can resist such beauty? I saw *him start*. I saw that look of wondering admiration, that intense mesmeric gaze. He stopped too; but she did not recoil from him. I watched her. No, no; she stood and gazed too. I watched her."

While he stood there thus communing with himself and kindling his wrath, the street-door opened, and a muffled figure comes out in the clear gas light. His hat is also drawn low down over his face, which is quite concealed. He walks on rapidly until he gets far down Market street. The bear-skin man keeps a short distance behind.

When the man ahead stops, it is in front of the hovel. He walks slowly before the house for some time; always in passing sends a curious, keen glance into the old rickety window.

The stained and time-worn curtain reveals, through a rent in the center, the group within. A little fire is blazing in the grate; the old lady is rocking herself as usual, looking very calm and peaceful. A small work-table stands before the fire, on which is an old tin lamp. Myra is seated by this, writing in a large book. A hand-kerchief is thrown over her head so that her face is only partially revealed. She writes rapidly, then stopping, puts her hand to her head, and seems to think. Then she raises those glorious eyes to heaven, and they are humid. She writes again—now she stops and weeps, and placing her left hand over her heart, sighs deeply.

Surprise, admiration, and curiosity, have now all given place to one overwhelming feeling of amazement. He is really as cold as the lamp-post against which he leans.

When our bear-skin man gets within ear shot, he catches these disjointed exclamations: "Strange! passing

strange! most marvelous! It must be the same! It can be no other than a living woman who sits there writing! I am bewildered! My head whirls! I am either dying, or I am frightened! I know nothing of either, save in the abstract; but I rather think this is death. Oh, God! I am content! Let me die, then, while I am gazing at her! I was taught to believe that the cold tomb enshrouded that matchless form! My mother told me so, and I have never yet doubted her truth. This, then, is only a vision, a glimpse of heaven."

"Past nine o'clock!" sung out the "Night Watch," "all's well."

The man in the slouched hat starts up, looks wildly around, and hurries off.

The watchman then takes his place against the lamp-post, and the poor inmates are subjected also to his gaze. He, no doubt, would have stopped there till morning, and left somebody else to cry out, "All's well," had not one of his comrades surprized him by rudely slapping him on the shoulder.

"Why, Murdoch, what in the devil's name are you standing there gazing at that old blue flag for? What in the h—— do you see there to peer at so '*frorociously?*'"

"Yes," added another, "it's Phil and myself what's been watching ye for ten minutes a'most; and be Jasus we jist thought ye was frozen in yer shoes, entirely."

"Pass on, pass on; I've got nothing to do with you," replied he, and as they walked away they laughed coarsely. This was an entire new phase in the behavior of their brother in office.

While he continues to gaze, the old curtain is drawn closely together; so that the aperture being closed the enrapturing vision is shut out, or rather in. The man grinds his teeth in impotent rage.

"There it is again, Murray could have stood here till

broad day-light and she would never have thought of closing that d——d rag. But as soon as I come, then, that's the way ! But I'll have her, and I'll make her rue the day that she flung the door so fiercely into my face, and then looked so dove-like on *him*. What right had she to treat me thus ? or what business has she being so pretty ? Why did she settle down in that little place on the way-side, if she don't want folks to look at her ? God forgive me ! I can't help my nature. I fall in love with beauty whenever I meet with it, and the more I should not, the more I do. I love to gaze at the lovely creature behind that old curtain, because I know she don't want me to."

It was the old lady who had closed the curtain, and she now calls on her granddaughter to join in the evening devotions.

Reader, had you been sufficiently near to hear without seeing, you would never have inferred from that address to Deity, that there was want, and misery, and squalid poverty in that house—so hopeful and grateful was the thanksgiving ; so fervent, glowing, and intense the praise ; so trusting and confident the invocation. In seeking the kingdom, that dear old saint had found all things added. She never doubted, for one single moment, the validity and steadfastness of God's promises. This sufficed for her happiness, better than silver and gold, stately mansions, ermine and fine linen. All these are unstable and perishable : but God's promises are immutable and indestructible.

That feeble, infirm woman was elevated by her faith and love above the common mutations of time, the vicissitudes of life. Nothing could make her afraid. Did sickness and sorrow assail, did friends desert, did enemies smite, did hunger pinch, did toil weary, and break down, and shatter the old casket, still the jewel within remained

untarnished. It was given into the keeping of one who knew the worth of the gem. She smiled at all the ills of life in her blunt way, well knowing that Christ's little flock had nothing to fear. Christ, the Good Shepherd! Oh! how beautiful are those words, "He will watch over them, and lead them into green pastures!" Even death had no terrors for her. The same Good Shepherd would be waiting at the portal to conduct his ransomed one into the presence of the Father. Is it any wonder, then, that that hovel should have seemed like a palace to her.

She thus retires to rest—but first entreating her granddaughter to follow her example. Finding all her persuasions fail, she essays to use an argument which, with ladies, is generally potent.

"Myra, my dear child, if you do not give up this ugly habit of sitting up all night, you will soon begin to look like a blighted, or frost-bitten flower. In a short time your skin will resemble an old, wilted cabbage-leaf."

Poor Myra smiled mournfully, as she replied,

"Ah! grandma, that is the fittest similitude you ever used in your life. I am what you describe, even now. But what matter? What use have I for charms? Yet to please you, I will soon retire. Indeed, mother, I intend from henceforth to obey every suggestion of your's, as faithfully as if I were a machine, set in motion by you. Then I shall be saved the trouble of thinking, and can feed on memories."

"I'm done: you are about to mount your stilts again, I see, child. Well! totter on. I'm afraid though you'll get a mighty fall, some of these days. Go to bed, go to bed. I suggest this then, as the first test of your obedience."

Myra rose and seemed to busy herself in the necessary preparations for retiring. Presently the old lady gave token of having found temporary rest from her labors.

The child, too, is sleeping sweetly. The lady is also disrobed of her faded, fine garments, and has donned a double wrapper of coarse cloth. She moves about very softly, puts all things to rights, places the little stand near the fire, having added a very little fuel to the dying embers ; then she takes out her journal, and turning back several leaves, reads, and weeps. Then she goes up very softly to the bedside, and kisses the child many times. After which she seats herself and writes impatiently, and nervously, as if afraid to stop or think.

CHAPTER XI.

THE JOURNAL.

“O remembrance:

Why dost thou open all my wounds again?”

“Thinking will make me mad. Why must I think,
When no thought brings me comfort.”

“Passions are likened best to floods and streams;
The shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb.”

“SUNDAY night, 10 o’clock. O my Father in heaven! Pity me! Spirit of my sainted mother, whose heart, like mine, was broken, hover near, and sustain me! I droop, I faint, dear mother! I have not thy sublime spirit of endurance, thy perfect patience, thy exalting philosophy, or thy meek, subdued piety. But Oh, I have all thy griefs. I inherit all thy sorrows, with none to help, none to listen, none to pity; and, alas! no self-sustaining power, and no Christian graces. I weep my eyes out; my soul is dissolved in weakness, while my nature and constitution are enfeebled and shattered. Come, gentle spirit, like that dove of old, and give me an earnest of thy sympathy; a token that thou art near! O dear spirit! if thou art permitted, let me hear the soothing rustle of thy angel-wings!”

The poor, grief-stricken, half-demented woman sat as if entranced, in the attitude of rapt attention, listening to catch that token.

Now, a change comes over her face—a shadow flits across it. She is disappointed, and she bows her head, and weeps while she plaintively murmurs,

"All things fail me! Hast thou too forgotten thy child, O my mother? Blessed Jesus, then pity me! I am taught, that Thou, and Thou only, never didst at any time, turn away from the wretched. Thou hast seen that this day has been one of intense torture. Thou knowest that my anguish of soul has been more than I could endure through another day. Oh! how I have longed for silence and solitude. I am not mistaken. I saw him to-day. He passed that window. I saw him start, then stop, and turn ghastly pale. I was at that moment standing there, dreaming of him; thinking over those halcyon days, before our troubles came. So vivid was this action of memory, that I thought myself still by his side, wandering through orange and myrtle groves. Seeing him thus, was so much a matter of course, that I smiled a joyous welcome, having for the nonce forgotten this frightful change. Yes! I smiled; and then I saw the blood rush back to his face, and he looked startled and bewildered. Just as I was about to fly to the door, and call out frantically on his dear, honored name, O God! that fearful promise, that awful oath, that heart-crushing, soul-killing secret came to my mind. —— The day my poor father imparted it to me, is one never to be forgotten. Such days as that, and this, occur but once in a lifetime. No nature is strong enough to endure a repetition; no mind firm enough to bear up under such a weight; no heart capacious enough to conceal its corrodings. My blood curdles at the remembrance! God help me! I feel I am on the brink of distraction."

She walks hurriedly across the room many times; then taking her seat, she again writes on slowly and wearily :

"I loved him so much! Oh! who ever loved as I did, or was loved as I was? I could get none to speak of him to me, and it was only when they thought me dying, and in answer to my frenzied entreaties, that as a death-bed

favor they whispered, ‘He is married ; so now turn your thoughts from earth to heaven.’ Oh ! why was I not suffered to die then ? Why left here only to bewail the past and dread the future ? To please my father then, I perjured my soul, and married too. But softly ; let me not revive that memory. O God ! Spare me this reminiscence. Let every association in my mind perish ; let every connecting link be sundered ; let all things die, so that there be no cue to that fearful connection. My poor grandmother is the chain by which I am forced to unite the past with the present. But for that, I should wish to annihilate all dates, all mementoes, all remembrances. My darling mother stood by her child as long as she lived. She was so just, upright, and pure that cruelty, vice, and crime did not stalk abroad in our vicinity then, as afterward. Oh ! I am very wretched !”

Just then the child stirred uneasily, and commenced speaking in a low, drowsy voice :

“Mamma, I love you ; won’t that do ? I love you ; let me kiss you, my sweet mother.” Then he threw his little arms up as if to embrace her.

“Now, may God forgive me !” cried that frantic mother. “My child, my child ! I have in my madness invoked maledictions on thy innocent head. O Saviour, intercede for me, and let not my wild ravings be visited on the head of this poor lamb.”

She threw herself on her knees by the bed, wrung her hands, wept, and prayed fervently in her incoherent way, until she even exhausted grief. Then she arose, bathed her eyes, and again wrote :

“I regret much that I stood beside the window to-day. I fear I shall never be able to subdue this restless spirit any more. I must hide away from him. He must not see me. I must not look upon him. I can not keep the oath, were I to do so. Alas ! to what a condition am I reduced ! To-morrow I must sit here again, a sort of

raree show, where everybody seems to feel free to enter. I must enact the same falsehood, play off the same insignificant cheat.

“Fashionable dress-maker! Saints and angels! I never have made a dress; I know not whether I could achieve such a thing to save my life; yet I am to be again insulted and gazed at. All this humiliation I must endure, because I had not the power to subdue, nay, subvert nature, to change God’s own work. He made me as I am. He gave me this loving heart; endued me with this yielding, trusting, grateful disposition, and cursed me with these fervent affections, this ardent nature, and then suffered me to be tempted beyond my strength. Now my heart is cold and dead; sometimes it seems to be iron, then stone, and again ice. But to-day, aye! to-day —

“How handsome he looked! I think I should have screamed with joy, had not I been so wrapped up in that dream. How superb he is in his glorious serenity! how magnificent in gloom! how sublime in trouble! Man, lover, friend, philosopher, Christian, he is more than human in each relation of life.

“I could not ask the child, could not trust myself to speak his name. Grandma did not allude to the handsome stranger. My poor little son! Oh! my head is dizzy. I grow wild! I am half dead! What will become of me? Brother, my brother! Father! you were very stern, fierce, and cruel; but you did it for the best, perhaps. I don’t know. Look down now, poor father, and see what your work has done. Behold thy lost, lost, lost child.” She falls heavily from her seat.

The tenants of that lowly place are so worn out by toil that they sleep soundly.

When the old lady rises, she finds Myra lying on the floor, apparently dead. A little stream of blood has issued from a contusion on the temple, which is now

coagulated. God knows how long she had been lying there ; she is white and cold, and does not breathe.

The poor old lady is frantic with grief and fright ; she runs to the door ; gives one piercing shriek of alarm. The house-maid at the opposite tenement is opening the windows ; she drops her broom, and runs over, saying—

“ What de matter, Mam ? ”

“ Look ! ” said the old lady, pointing to her prostrate child.—“ For the love of God ! run for a Doctor ! ”

“ I can’t leave home, Mam—I darn’t to—but I’ll run tell little Miss Minny Dun ; she’ll fix everything right for you.”

In the mean time, Clarence had been roused up ; and instead of, “ child-like,” adding to the commotion, he dresses himself, and seeing his grandmother making unsuccessful efforts to get his mother in bed, without saying a word—the tears streaming down his cheeks—he takes hold of her feet, and they raise her up. He then puts on his little cap, slips from the house, and runs along the street, sobbing as if his heart would break.

It being early, there are but few persons passing. None seem to heed that poor child. He has accosted some half-dozen persons ; but taking him for a little beggar, rehearsing his part, which must be played over with variations a hundred times during the course of the day, they push him rudely aside. He would sometimes take hold of a coarse, rough man’s hand, and raising his tearful eyes to his face, say—“ Oh, Sir, for God’s sake, help me to find a doctor ; ” but he would also shake him off. That short syllable, “ help, ” had steeled their hearts. None waited to hear his sad story.

Dear little soul ! he ran that cold morning, only half clad as he was, all the way to the market-house, without stopping. There he is still unheeded ; till presently, catching one familiar note, and listening, he hears a friendly

voice : darting to the spot, he throws his arms around the neck of a rather uncouth, ugly negro-man, and after kissing his sooty face two or three times, he finds words to tell his tale.

"God A'mighty bress de darlin child," said he, embracing him.

"Oh ! Uncle Ned, my dear mother will be dead—quite dead—if you don't come now, and run all the way."

"Why, honey ! de'll whip ebery bit o' skin offer Uncle Ned's back, if I leave my posties here."

The boy wrung his hands, crying—"Then I fear she is lost!"

An Irish woman who had been listening, comes up, and taking him in her arms, cries out, as she wiped her eyes, "Oh, the darlint lamb. Come, Ned, take the dear, and just go along. I'll stay by and watch the stall, and stand between you and blame."

Uncle Ned takes him from the woman, and placing his great, hard, horn hand over his little bare feet, he moves off at a rapid pace. He takes him to Doctor Brown's office ; there the little fellow is allowed to tell his troubles in his own language ; which is rendered almost incomprehensible, on account of his choking sobs.

When they arrive, they find little Minny Dun and the grandmother engaged in rubbing the patient. They are so much absorbed that they have forgotten to shut the street door, and there are a pair of large, coal-black, but gentle eyes, peeping out from amid coarse furs, at them. He stands in the way, waiting to be of service. The Doctor enters, visibly shuddering, as he beholds the tableau, as also with cold.

"Boy, put down the child, and make a fire."

"Yes, Sir, I gwine to do dat of my own 'cord. I knows ole Missus dare, and young Massa, and de poor dead lady. I loves 'em all. Dey give poor Uncle Ned dinner, one day, when he quite starved a'most."

Having made the fire, Ned goes for water. The child creeps up to his mother, and dropping on his knees seizes her hand, which he covers with kisses and tears. The Doctor has done a great deal for her, and she at last gives some signs of life.

Doctor Brown thinks of something which he needs.

He looks round for a messenger. Ned has gone, and the child is half dead with grief; he steps to the door, and seeing our bear-skin man there, he calls to him.

"Murdoch, come hither. Can't you do a service to this poor family? They are in great distress."

"With the most hearty good will, I assure you, sir."

He is then entrusted with the errand; and before the Doctor had taken a half-dozen turns in the room he was back.

He entered now without ceremony, and after handing the articles to the Doctor, he approached the bed and gazes with a reverential look at the patient. There is no contortion of muscle, limb or feature. She reclines in the most easy, graceful attitude; one arm has been bandaged for the use of the lancet, this is bare, and is thrown up over her head; while the other hand is clasped in that of her son, still kneeling by her side.

The man seems to be magnetized; and is at first unable to withdraw his gaze. Now he turns mournfully away, and wipes his eyes.

Minny Dun has gone home, for a moment. Old Mrs. Wise is in the kitchen. The Doctor wishes to raise the patient, for the purpose of pouring some potion down her throat. He looks round—

"Here, Murdoch! 'Tis a matter of life and death, and death has much the best chance just now; else I would not place her in this perilous situation," said he, with a mischievous smile. "Here sit behind this poor lady, while I pour this medicine down her throat."

Murdoch hesitated, and seemed to hang back.

"Come, my friend, she will strangle to death, unless she is supported ;" and he points to Myra's shoulders.

The man approached, as if he were treading on hallowed ground, and very softly takes her in his arms and leans her up against his rugged, giant-like breast. When the Doctor attempts to administer the drug, he can not; for Murdoch is seized with such an uncontrollable agitation that he shakes the whole bed. Doctor Brown looks up in astonishment.

"Why, what is the matter, Murdoch? Have you got an ague, too?"

When he looked into his face, he well-nigh dropped the cup. His eyes were blazing, scorched up with feeling, and had become blood-shot. He is very pale; almost as much so as the poor lady on whom his fiery gaze is fixed. By a superhuman effort he quells the storm within. In doing so he has wound his arms so tightly around poor Myra, that she struggles and writhes in pain.

"Why, Murdoch, you are worse than any school-boy. Loose your hold, man. Presently the lady will open her eyes; then she will think herself enfolded in 'bruin's embrace,' if she sees all that bear-skin about her. Let us put her down, now."

When the good, honest, but rough Night Watch, was released, he did not stop to say a word, but rushed from the house. Then he kept on his way, walking very rapidly, until he came to a lonely spot—a covered bridge. He now threw open his coat, vest, and shirt; baring his breast to the keen north-west wind, he sends forth a shrill sort of sound, between a hiss and a whistle:

"W-h-e-w! w-h-e-w! Come, now, poor heart, don't burst through this hard, strong rind, this thick bark! W-h-e-w! . . . w-h-ew! . . . 'Peace! be still,' poor fluttering devil. I wonder what business such a carcass as this has with such a heart.—W-h-e-w! Well! from this time I'm a better man. No more coarse, low

connections. No more vulgar associates. No, no! This breast, black, coarse, and savage-looking as it is (and he plucked fiercely at the luxuriant growth of black hair), has supported an angel, and these arms have encircled that heavenly form. Whew! my blood boils, and my brain seems to shift about in my noddle. Oh, I do wish I could get my chest cool once more. W-h-e-w!"

"What is the matter, Murdoch?" said a rich, mellow, friendly voice. "What are you doing with your clothes open this frosty morning?"

The Night Watch averted his eyes as if afraid Colonel Murray would read his secret. He endeavors to draw his clothes together, over that broad, black chest, but he becomes embarrassed, fumbles with his buttons, and makes no headway. He now starts off, walking hurriedly along, wishing to outstrip his companion.

"Why, friend Murdoch, what has brought you out here before sunrise, with bare breast to court the northern breeze in December?"

"Faith, I may ask you the same question."

"Not altogether a parallel case, I think, Murdoch. As to myself, I am just at this time cursed with a sort of unrest. I can not sleep, I can not read or write, and worse than all, I can not stay at home."

The bear-skin man walks on moodily, without replying. Now he darts a keen glance at Murray, and is a thousand times more jealous than before. The last half hour, though, has made him more human. An hour ago, and he was almost fiendish when thinking of his rival, as he viewed him.

Oh! divine love! thine influence is marvelous on the coarse and savage nature of man. How it softens, and refines, and exalts, while it also ennobles. We speak of that genuine spark which is from heaven, and not of its semblance, which we think emanates from the other place.

"Murdoch, I have been looking for you. I wish to gain some information on a subject with which I think you must be acquainted. You saw me standing before the window of that house on Market street?"

"Yes, certainly I did, three or four times. What of it?"

"Well, my friend, that house contains the most lovely child I ever beheld. I should like to know something of his parentage. Will you tell me all you know, and have heard?"

"I have heard very little, and I know less," replied the Night Watch, with a dry, curt voice, impatient manner, and dogged look.

Nothing dismayed, Col. Murray proceeded with his queries. "How long have they been there?"

"Not more than two or three weeks in that house, I think."

"Have they lived elsewhere in the city?"

"I believe they boarded at some hotel when they first came."

"How many are there in the family?"

"I think only an old lady, a child, and its mother."

"What name? what do they call themselves?"

"Wise, I think," answered the man, now with a decidedly impatient manner.

"What is their occupation, and where do they come from?"

"Ah! now you are too hard for me, sir. I don't know that, and I don't think I've any right to know. My vocation don't take me that far along, I'm thinking. The young woman's got a sign upon the door. Haven't you seen it?"

"A sign? What sort of a sign?"

"Fashionable dress-maker from New York. Good morning, colonel, I have engagements."

Murray was filled with amazement. He walked on

rapidly, until he reaches the hovel, and passes several times before the door: but all is still within. He now, for the first time, remarks the "sign."

"Well, after all, I must be mistaken. It can't be she; but oh! how like! What a quandary I'm in! One moment I am convinced, the next I am filled with doubt. I presume this is a just punishment for doubting the word of my mother."

As he returns home, he meets old Faggot.

"I don't believe I have been out for two days or nights that I have not encountered that old Jew. I dislike to do so, for I always think of shame, crime, and misery when I see him, carrying his head hid almost between his shoulders, as he does when walking the street. He is a strange creature: repulsive, and at the same time, attractive, if I may be allowed to use such a paradox."

Thus soliloquized Murray until he reached home.

CHAPTER XII.

A DOMESTIC SCENE IN HIGH LIFE.

"OH! I have passed a miserable night,
So full of fearful dreams, of ugly sights,
That as I am a Christain, faithful man,
I would not spend another such a night,
Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days:
So full of dismal terror was the time."

COL. MURRAY and his imperious mother are making a silent meal. It is dinner; himself, his mother, and little daughter are seated at table. Three servants are in attendance, one stationed behind each chair. You can not conceive of the stateliness and solemnity of these silent dinners. Everything is magnificent, and arranged with the same particularity as if the Queen of England, or the President of the United States, was going to dine there by special invitation.

Mrs. Murray is dressed with the most elaborate care. I think I have before mentioned that she was about sixty years old, but looking young even for forty. To-day she is attired in a rich purple brocade, trimmed with velvet, a shade or two darker than the silk; very costly collar and undersleeves. Her complexion is fine for any age; somewhat too sanguine, always, immediately after the arduous duties of the toilette have been gotten through with. She wears her own natural hair, but not its natural hue. It is now as black as midnight, and arranged in full beautiful bandeaux. Her eyes are keen, piercing, black ones, and like her hair, they glisten. Her teeth are even and white, and *artistically* beautiful; but they do

not seem to be steadfast in her head, or they are particularly sympathetic, for when she speaks, or laughs, or eats, these finely *polished ivories* are seen to work up and down, with responsive movement. But when the lady is herself moved by anger, or any other violent agitation, the teeth seem to be acted upon by the same influence, shivering and shaking as if possessed of a separate life. She is very spare and lathlike, thin even to attenuation. But then she wears rich, flowing robes and handsome drapery. That poor *frame* is generally concealed under a mass of costly attire.

Col. Murray,—but, my dear reader, I will leave him to your imagination. Just call to mind the handsomest man you ever saw in all your life, on a grand scale, and of the dark order. Then endow him with a gigantic intellect, indomitable will, strong and fiery passions, affectionate and glowing temperament, good, honest, upright heart; let him be wayward and eccentric (like all geniuses), proud and unsocial, sometimes ungenial; but all these incongruities are tempered by good sense, and deep, fervent, religious emotions. Then give him fine, large, deep, lucid, black eyes; black moustache, whiskers, and hair.

They had remained for some time after the cloth was removed, over their wine; up to this time preserving that silence unbroken — even the little Genevieve seemed to be afraid to prattle. Suddenly Col. Murray speaks, and his voice, as usual, is rich, and deep, and impressive; but it has lost its mellow smoothness.

“Mother, where is Marianna Glencoe?”

Mrs. Murray’s face flushed the deepest crimson; then as the blood flowed back she became deathly pale — all but those two spots in the center of each cheek. Her son beholds this strange emotion with amazement, and now repeats the question, watching her closely:

“Did you tell me, madam, that Marianna Glencoe was dead? Am I mistaken?”

She at length replies, but with evident effort: "Well, who says she is not dead? I am sure nobody has a better right to know than I, and I *did* tell you that they were all dead; and they are dead and buried."

"Do you say now, madam, that Marianna Glencoe is dead?" And he looked at her fixedly, as if he would peer into her soul.

She could not meet that cold, keen, steel-like glance; it seemed to pierce her. She fell back in her chair.

Murray approached in alarm, but she signed him away, and calling to her maid, retired to her room in great disorder. Soon after, the girl came out, saying her mistress was ill, and wished to see the family physician. He sends James for Doctor Brown, and then, forgetting all those conventionalities which had been taught him from his cradle, and kept up between mother and son with such punctilious scrupulosity, was about to rush unbidden for the first time into her presence. But Tivvy meets him at the door.

"Don't come in here, Mas'r Charles; for your life don't enter this room without leave and license." This was spoken in a whisper.

"Then go back and tell my mother that I am waiting to see her, and also most anxious to serve her in any way. Tell her this, Tivvy, with my fervent love."

He remained at the door, expecting to be admitted, and in answer to his respectful, affectionate message he hears her shriek out: "Who? Charles Murray? He come in here? Oh! God forbid! No! no! no! Where is he? Then lock that door. I would not have him come in here for worlds. But, Tivvy, tell him I am very much obliged, I wish to sleep now. When I can, I will send for him. Oh, yes! certainly, greatly obliged." Then he heard a sob, as if she were going into hysterics.

The girl was detained a short time with her mistress. When she came out, she found Col. Murray sitting by the

parlor fire with his little daughter on his knee, looking gloomily out of the window.

When that good, familiar creature, the family physician, came, he finds Mrs. Murray really ill. One convulsion after another makes her case an alarming one to even the steady practitioner of twenty years. She is in bed, but there has been no change made in the appointments of her person, other than the rich brocade dress for that of an equally rich robe de chambre of satin.

At first he found her so still and cold that he feared she had died before he came. Yet those hectic spots were there, as ever, glowing on the poor, lank cheeks. In alarm, the doctor rings the bell. The maid starts up from behind the bed, where she had been dozing, while her mistress was dying.

"Go call your master, Tivvy; I believe your mistress is dead."

The girl shakes her head, saying,

"I can't do it, doctor; can't, indeed."

"Tivvy, I command you summon Col. Murray to the death-bed of his mother."

"Can't do it, doctor. She made me swear that not even to save my life, and hern too, would I ever let Mas'r Charles come into her bedroom. If she was dead, and he was to come in, 'twould make her stir."

"Strange state of things. I'll go myself. I fear Charles Murray would never forgive me if I should let her die off and not warn him."

"Better not," says Tivvy. "See! didn't I tell you it would make her stir, even though she be on the verge and confines of the tother world. Look!" Sure enough, there she was trying to speak, and is able at last to make him comprehend that on no account must he call in her son.

"Well, it is no business of mine, but I must think that it is deuced unnatural."

"You see," said Tivvy, "she's very proud of Mas'r Conrad; but, alas! ah me! alack-a-daisical! there has come a great change over 'em both in the few, last, several years. And now, doctor, I declare I'm 'fraid she aint got a drop of tenderness in her soul for him." ("Or for anybody else, I'm thinking," threw in the doctor.) "Still she's proud of him, and he just treats her at all times like she was the sure-'nough, living, live Queen o' Sheepy. Nothing makes this great man s'er ve from his good purposes, no how."

"Well, I know, Tivvy; but when people come to die they generally get over all these strange quirks and qualms, and make a clean breast of it, as the Scotch say. I think they ought."

"Yes, I think so too; but, doctor, it'll not be so with them, I tell you it won't, that's all. That secret, whatever it is, and the grudge too, whatever *it* is, will go down to the grave with 'em."

The doctor now approached the bed; the poor invalid has roused up, and by signs and a few incoherent words, makes him comprehend that she wishes him to sit down by her. She whispered again, telling the maid to leave.

"Now lock the door. Is all secure?"

"Yes," replied Doctor Brown.

"Then help me to rise."

Imagine the doctor's look. "Why, madam, you are out of your head! I did not suppose you could raise your hand; you are ill, Mrs. Murray; I will not be responsible for the consequences if you attempt to get up."

"I will take the responsibility on my own shoulders; but I shall rise. I have that to say, which being said in bed will cause my speedy death."

"Madam, then I insist on your recumbent posture."

"But ere he had time to prevent it, without any aid, she sat bolt upright in bed, saying, "I should like to know

who is to dictate to me." Then she commenced speaking in a strong, rather shrill voice :

"O Doctor, I know that that cold, haughty boy will be the death of me at last. I can not live through another such a scene."

"What is it, my dear madam?" placing his finger on her pulse. "I am very much grieved; yet it can't be helped. You would have to undo more than half, maybe your whole life, before you could get things straightened up. You have been prime minister at home, and principal actor in this sad drama so long, now you must fold your arms and act audience while the plot of the play is played out. *You* play no more, and there is no help for you on earth. You had better try whether you can get any from up there," pointing heavenward.

"Are you done, sir? Now let me talk, if your sermon is ended."

"Go on, madam."

"Oh, you don't know how that wretched boy frightened me."

The good doctor seeing that she was about to go off, shook her somewhat rudely, which brought her to; then he seated himself by her side, and thus she continued to sob and talk :

"O that I were dead! O that I could be at rest!"

"It would be as well," quoth the doctor. "Rest is a very desirable thing. Most of us need it, and all like it. I wish you were at peace (and rest too," muttered he parenthetically, "then you could cause no more unrest to the good and innocent). But to the point: What new trouble has turned up to-day, madam?"

"Oh, my God! give me strength to tell it. He asked me; oh, he asked me if Marianna Glencoe was dead."

"Well," responded the doctor.

"Yes, he asked me in that low, ominous voice, and with

that thunder-cloud look, whether I still asserted that Marianna Glencoe was dead."

"Well!" again responded he.

"Well! indeed. 'Tis not well! There is nothing well! and I don't believe there ever will be anything well again. I'm sure I never shall be ——"

"Amen!" ejaculated Doctor Brown!

"I hate everybody!"

"Humph! I don't doubt it," rejoined he.

"You, and all the world are leagued with him; with Charles Conrad Murray. Even that fool Tivvy has begun to leer at him."

A faint smile lurking in the corners of the doctor's mouth seems to enrage her.

"Yes, you, and she, and all of them, have formed a combination against me. The devils, and all the fiends in hell are conspiring, and my own son at the head of them," almost shrieked the patient.

"I shouldn't wonder," added he, jocosely.

But now he found he had this time indulged his vein of ironical humor beyond the point of discretion. It was natural to him, and he sometimes used it with a view to laugh her out of her whimsies — generally succeeding. She must now be soothed; but ere he could calm her perturbation, she relapses into hysteria. She is ill, and must die, if the most efficient means are not used. So he calls Tivvy, who was waiting at the door.

"Now, good girl, tell James to prepare a hot bath instantly, and have it here in the shortest possible time.

When she returned, he said, "Remove all this flummery; put away all these falsehoods;" indicating Mrs. Murray's face.

Tivvy looked alarmed, and said, "Doctor I darsn't do that, 'cept she be about going off."

"I tell you, girl, there is no time to lose. She'll be dead before we get the bath, I fear."

Just then James and the cook came in bringing a huge tub with steaming water. Soon after the poor creature (at least as much as was left of her when Tivvy was done "taking off and putting away") was put into the bath, her struggles ceased. Well they might—she had fainted.

"Call in Murray. She's gone, I do believe!" But that order seemed to rouse her. She opened her eyes and feebly shook her head.

"Ha! didn't I tell you so? I believe it will resurrect her when she is dead sure enough," said the lady's maid.

"It is wonderful!" exclaimed Doctor Brown. "I never saw anything like it in my life before."

"No, I reckon not. Nor no body else never did, neither," says Tivvy.

When the poor old woman found herself dismantled and robbed of all foreign aids and disguises, she commenced sobbing and wringing her hands, and screaming at the top of her voice. But Doctor Brown and the faithful, though frivolous maid, by their joint efforts succeeded in quieting this violent spasmodic grief, frenzy, or whatever it was. He then placed her back in bed, and drugged her heavily; so she soon sunk into a deep sleep. After feeling her pulse, and watching her for a few moments, he took his hat and left the room. Tivvy followed him out.

"Doctor will *she* get over it?" The girl in speaking of her mistress invariably used the pronoun for the noun. Hence the habit of the domestics about the establishment was to say *she* and *her*, and it was understood at once.

"Doctor, will *she* get well?" repeated Tivvy.

"I don't know, Tivvy. That is with them up yonder," pointing to heaven. "But, come, my good girl, and tell all about it."

"No sir, I can't; 'cause I don't know. I wish I did."

"Well, are you on your mistress's or your master's side, girl?"

"Lors a marcy! bless your soul, sir, I aint on nobody's side, 'cause I aint acquainted with them dark, deep, dread secrets what's always eroding on *her* poor conscience, and working and swurging up in Mas'r Charlie's mind."

"Don't Col. Murray's man know anything about the cause of these singular outbreaks of the old lady, and the settled gloom on poor Charles' spirits?"

"Can't say, sir; don't think anybody knows much but they ownselvses. But I do know one thing: jest as soon as she wakes out of that sleep, she won't hardly wait to fix on her things, before she'll send me right off after old Faggot."

"What, that old Jew Devil? Old fire and Faggot? You don't tell me so? Why, he would prove a second 'Merchant of Venice' toward anybody who had the misfortune to owe him a dollar. I would not wish the greatest enemy I have any greater hell than to fall into the clutches of this old Faggot. This is really the worst feature in the case. Send for that old hell-hound! What does she want with him?"

"I don't know, sir; but jest as soon as she wakes up, if it's even midnight, I'll be 'spatched after him, that's all."

"She will not wake to-night, Tivvy; you can go to sleep."

"Won't she, though? Well, I'm sorry for her, anyhow, but what a life I lead. Jest think of it! I'm bound to be faithful to her, but she's so hard to serve. Col. Murray is not, and I might succeed in 'scuring his favor ef I'd blab; but I won't 'peach, it's so mean."

"I thought you didn't know nothing in the world, no how, Tivvy?"

The girl looked down, and the red blood mounted to her temples, and showed itself through her tawny skin.

"Well! no more'n I don't. Anyhow, nobody knows

that I know what I does know," said the negro, gloomily and significantly.

"Tivvy, does Conrad never get you into a tight place by asking you questions about it?"

"Question me! Col. Murray question and 'terrogate a nigger! Now, I know, doctor, you is joking. Why, you jest as soon think that one of them golden angels from the New Jerusalem would come down and hold a converse with a 'black-me-moor,' as Mas'r Charles. I reckon he'd knock me down ef I was to tell him that she sent me after old Faggot."

"Never mind, then, say no more. I thought you spoke of telling him something, and I presumed on that."

"So I did, and sometimes I think I ought; then I think I oughtn't. I reckon, though, ef he ever once got a inkling of what I knows, he'd listen."

"Well, will you tell him?"

"I don't know, I can't tell 'zactly whether it's destinat-ed for me to do it or not; but I reckon it taint. If it is my destination to tell him, I'll be forced to do it. If not, I can't. Now, that's the sum total of the matter."

When Doctor Brown passed along the hall, on his way out, he heard the slow, measured step of Murray in the parlor, as he paced the room. He looked in. At first he did not raise his eyes, and knew not that the doctor was there until the latter spoke.

"Ah! my dear sir, I'm very happy to see you; take a seat. How is my mother?"

"Doing very well now, sir; but she's been bad,—bad indeed; pretty nigh gone, when I arrived."

"Good God! why was I not called?"

"Couldn't," answered the doctor, frowning.

"But why?"

"Can't tell, don't know. If you don't know yourself, I've no right to know. Good night, sir," said the good,

upright, well-meaning, but bustling little Doctor Brown, who left the magnificent Murray to his own somber reflections, and plods on his way cheerily, doing his duty.

Murray continued to pace the room.

"Oh! God! to think that after this lapse of years, in which I have so honored and loved my mother, I should now be forced to doubt her truth—that my faith should be shaken in my own mother, who was my standard. Oh! my soul is very dark."

He sits down, meekly leaning on his hand and weeps. Yes, that proud, cold, and sometimes stern man, who in the world bears himself so grandly, sits there and weeps over what he thinks is his mother's first dereliction from her exalted morality. There is so much that is incomprehensible, such dark, deep mystery; her violent agitation; her startled and bewildered look, when he asked her that question.

He starts up wildly, strikes his clenched hand against his forehead, and rushes from the house. When in the street, he finds all very quiet and peaceful. The gentle moon hangs in the heavens, shining on calmly and sweetly. The few little stars that have not been forced to hide their diminished heads in her superior light, seem to twinkle with gladness. The rude northern blast is hushed, or only heard in distant moanings. All nature is sleeping and being renovated for the duties of the coming day. Only man, vile man is restless and perturbed.

Murray walks on regardless of all; alike heedless of time or place, until he arrives at that portion of the city where the houses are old and moldering to decay. In one little window of an old hovel a faint light glimmers.

"Ha!" with a sudden recollection. "Ha! It was here on this spot, through that little window, that I gazed on that vision of beauty. Her semblance—Oh, how perfect! Who can she be? Would that I knew! If Marianna be dead (and it must be so), then who is this?"

He was roused from his reverie by a groan, or rather a deep-drawn sigh near him. By the light of that sweet moon he descries a huge figure, clad in coarse furs, leaning against the lamp-post. Ere he had time to accost him, he had glided away.

Murray now takes his place, and peers keenly into the window; but nothing is revealed. All within is still and dark.

He returns home. On entering the house a feverish desire to see his mother seizes upon him. He calls to mind, that since his childhood he has never been permitted to enter that chamber unannounced, and then sometimes after long delay. Yet he seems unable to resist the affectionate impulse of his kind nature. He steals softly to the door—hesitates. Is this wrong? Is it a violation of any law save that of foolish etiquette, for a son to approach his sick mother uncalled? Oh, no! Nature, duty, religion—all would sanction this act.

He enters. A small flame of gas issues from the burner, intended for a night-lamp. Everything is arranged with great precision—for Tivvy is well trained. She has fallen asleep in that gorgeous rocking-chair. Her head droops on one side; one hand hangs over the arm, her foot is on the velvet stool—just the attitude in which her mistress always dozed. Tivvy was an ardent admirer of Mrs. Murray's grand ways, and aped them.

He bestows one look of kindly indulgence on the sleeping maid: then turns to the bed. What means that start? that bewildered look?

“‘Angels and ministers of grace defend us!’ What do I behold? Where is my mother? Tivvy—good girl, come here. Get up, Tivvy.”

He shakes her violently, but she slumbers on.

Murray jerks her up, and at the same time catching up a glass of water, dashes it fiercely into her face. She opens her eyes, and stares distractedly at him.

"Lord a marcy ! Mas'r Charles Conrad Murray—you in here, and she undressed. Oh, pray, sir, go out. Oh, she'll sell me to the 'soul drivers,' away from James Ross, my 'spoused husband,' if she finds it out." She drops on her knees, sobbing out—"Oh, Mas'r Charles, would you bring all this sorrow and disgrace on a poor 'fianced nigger maiden. I tell you, Mas'r Conrad, we's got feelings and 'fections, same as you, if our skins is black."

"Hush, Tivvy! my mother will never know I have come in to see her a moment at midnight, because she spurned me from the door yesterday. I came in to crave her blessing. I can not exist while estranged from her."

"How did you git in? I thought I fastened the door."

"No, I came by that door, and not through the key-hole, as your alarmed looks would indicate. Calm yourself; no harm shall come to you. Now, Tivvy, come here, and tell me who this care-worn, emaciated, miserable-looking aged person is? and where is my handsome mother?" He drags the maid to the bedside, and points to old Mrs. Murray, now unmasked.

"Why, Mas'r Charlie, is you losing your nine senses that away? Why that's her; your own grand, aristocraticus mother, and my poor old Mistress. Indeed, that's her."

"Oh no, girl! it can't be; I can not recognize my fine-looking mother in that wasted form there."

"It's her though, Mas'r Charlie, notwithstanding, nevertheless, for all that."

"Poor mother," says he, dropping on his knees, "have I done this? My asking that one question, has it caused this fearful spoliation? Is remorse, then, so voracious as to swallow up all thy good looks in one night?" He kisses his mother's withered hand, and weeps again.

"Oh Luddy! Oh Luddy! Mas'r Charles, what makes you take on so? you didn't do nothing to her; she's only

got all her things off. She looks just that away every night. Come, hush up, now. Look, here she is!"

She raised the lid of a dressing-case, and disclosed to the wonder-stricken man those marvelous works of art, by whose power the old and ugly are rejuvenated and made pretty.

"Oh, Tivvy, I am amazed. What are these?" toying with the different cosmetics, and pointing to the pearly teeth.

"He! he! he!" giggled the negro. "Why them's her fixins, what reforms her into a middle aged handsome lady. . . . The Lord of Hosties! I've done let it out! I did'nt never mean to tell! Oh! oh! That's one of her secrets what she's always been a keeping from her own son. Oh, Mas'r Charles, she'll burn, or hang me alive, if she hears."

He could not refrain from bursting out into a spasmodic laugh, the girl's terror was so ludicrous.

Now the patient moved; roused perhaps by that unnatural cachinnation. She mutters "Tivvy, Tivvy, come here—don't you know I can't speak? Yes. Well, tell him to come, but under cover of night, mind you. The usurious Jew dog! I must see him once more, anyhow. Accursed dog, of an accursed race!" She opens her eyes; they fall on her son.

"Well, Faggot—you are here, are you? Did any one see you enter? How, old infidel! methinks you are looking wondrous well, to-night?"

Tivvy jumps at Col. Murray and forces him out, shuts the door, and locks it. When she returns to the bed-side, her mistress has fallen asleep. The maid seats herself in the same luxurious arm chair, draws a long breath, and ejaculates to herself—

"Well: I know I'm a poor, ruined, done up nigger! if Mas'r Charlie Conrad Murray was like everybody else."

CHAPTER XIII.

A YOUNG RAVEN FED.

“SPEAK gently, kindly, to the poor;
Let no harsh term be heard;
They have enough they must endure,
Without an unkind word.”

DOCTOR BROWN was roused the morning after the preceding events by a messenger, but before he had dressed, or even made his ablutions, our friend Murdoch, alias “the bear-skin man,” alias the Night Watch, made his appearance in the doctor’s sleeping room.

“Ha! Murdoch, you are early, and you come unannounced; but you are welcome, Murdoch, for I know a good and true heart beats under that savage, wild beast hide of yours.”

“Thank you, doctor; but I didn’t come to bandy compliments. I come on business.”

“Well, my friend, you are equally welcome. What is it?”

The man hesitates, and his face grows fiery red, and his eyes glow like the live coals in the grate.

A quick perception of what was going on in the hiding places of that rough man’s heart, takes hold of the little doctor, and he chokes down a disposition to laugh outright.

Murdoch, in the twinkling of an eye, sprang up, and seized him by the arm, exclaiming angrily, “What are you laughing at, sir? God knows, it is no laughing matter.”

"You are a fool, Murdoch. I am not laughing at you; my throat, these frosty mornings, gets full of phlegm."

The Night Watch reseats himself, looking very much abashed, still eyeing the doctor with distrust.

"Come, come, man! tell me. I'm called this morning, else I'd not be out of bed so early. How can I be of service to you?"

"Why I called this morning—I called—I—I just called," and then he fairly broke down.

"Yes, I know you did," says the doctor, coming to the fire. But finding his companion to be overcome by some strange embarrassment, he abruptly led to the subject, which he sees is making such a boy of the man.

"See here, Murdoch, I have been so occupied, that I have not had time to call again to see our beautiful patient down Market street. Can you tell me how she is?"

"Well, it is that which has brought me here this morning, so early. I havn't seen her since, either; but good little Minny Dun says she's powerful bad off. Minny is in and out every hour, and helps them a great deal. That's a great little creature, that Minny Dun. Now, Dr. Brown, you've been acquainted with Murdoch, the Night Watch, a long time."

"Yes."

"Did you ever know him to do a dishonest or mean act?"

"No."

"Did you ever know him to tell a lie?"

"No."

"Good! Did you ever know him to do a foolish thing?"

"Yes."

"What?" says the other, starting up.

"Oh, sit down, Murdoch, and tell your tale out, for God's sake! I have only five minutes more to wait," looking at his watch.

"You know, also, doctor, that I am a poor man; but you didn't know, I reckon, that poverty can keep a little fund for charity, did you, doctor?"

"No—yes—I don't know whether I did or not; go on."

The man stretches himself out, and taking from his breeches pocket a soiled silk purse, indifferently well filled with small silver and gold coin, chuck's it into the open palm of the doctor,—“There!” wipes his eyes with his coat-sleeve, rises, and is about to depart without further explanation.

“Stop, my friend, I have no bill against you. What does this mean?”

He returns, looks fixedly at the doctor, while the blood again rushes to his face, his temples, and even to his eyes; then drawing quite near to him, whispers, “Supply that poor lady with all she needs for herself and family. Give her every attention, furnish all medicines, and save her! Oh, save her doctor! and I'll bind myself to you for life. Excuse me, sir;” dropping his eyes under the astonished gaze of his companion. Then again, lowering his voice to a gentle monotone, “I mean I'll become general paymaster.” Without waiting for a reply, he hurries from the house.

The doctor looks after him, exclaiming, “There goes the noblest work of God! His best mechanism was used to form the heart of that brawny, rough fellow. Would I were rich! he, nature's nobleman, should not pace these streets all night, in such strict fidelity to his office, crying, ‘All's well,’ when, as poor old Mrs. Murray says, ‘all never is well.’ Satan himself is oftentimes let loose in these streets, and then of course ‘is to pay.’ Still that honest Night Watch on his way, having hushed the uproar, and smothered the devil, cries, ‘All's well.’ Good, upright soul! that's the only lie I ever knew him tell. Just so soon as I have made this visit, I will call to see his ‘lady-

love ; for by heavens ! that savage ‘ bear-skin ’ is head over heels in love with the divine creature. How tame he has become under its influence ! As docile as a lamb, a dove, or a new born babe.”

When Dr. Brown had made his visit to the patient above mentioned, he turned his steps toward that lowly cot. On arriving, the door is opened by the same beautiful boy with the golden curls.

“ Come in, sir ; Oh ! I am so glad to see you,” says the dear little fellow, as he waves him in.

“ How is your mother, my darling ? ”

“ I think, sir, she is better. Come and see.”

He leads the doctor to his mother, who looks at the lady with an expression of surprise as well as admiration.

“ How are you to-day, Mrs. Wise ? ”

“ Thank you, sir, better now.” And she drops those curtains, those long, silken fringes over her heavenly blue eyes, thereby concealing them from the ardent gaze of the mercurial little man. Those singularly fascinating eyes seemed to exercise a sort of mesmeric influence over every beholder. I scarcely think the lady was aware of this power. We know that she did not intend to use it.

While the doctor busies himself in finding and counting that feeble pulse, he devours her face and person with his glances. Oh ! how exquisitely beautiful he thinks her ; even that word becomes tame and insufficient when applied to that incomparable woman. Her rich, dark hair has escaped from under the little snowy cap ; her arms and neck are enveloped in a loose drapery of fine white linen ; all the other surroundings, as she lay there so calm and peaceful, are also replete with purity ; while chaste refinement is blended with severe simplicity. Even the atmosphere seems rarified and purer than elsewhere. In a small vase by the bedside is a sweet rose, and a few geranium leaves.

“ Ha ! roses and green leaves ? ” taking them up.

"Yes, sir," replied Mrs. Wise, opening her eyes only again to meet the fervent, admiring look of her companion.

"Where did you get them?"

"Dear Minny brought them, I think, from heaven. Indeed, sir, she must have dropped down from that place. None but a ministering angel could be as good, and do exactly as she does. Did you ever see Minny, Doctor?"

"No—yes—I think I did meet her here a few days ago, mam."

"You would not think her pretty at first, but when you come to know her as well as I do, you would be sure to love her, and think her the prettiest creature in all the world."

"One exception, I'd make one exception," said he, snatching up her hand, intending to carry it to his lips; but finding the delicate creature recoil from this rudeness, he placed his finger on her pulse again.

A neatly-spread breakfast table occupied one corner of the room; a nice, cheerful little fire blazed in the grate. The child's clothes looked clean and comfortable, thanks to little Minny Dun, and he and his mother are certainly very beautiful.

Presently the old lady came in from the shed, her sleeves rolled up over her elbows, a clean white apron on. She proclaims her occupation in the kitchen by her cold, red hands, and the napkin thrown across her shoulders.

Doctor Brown sees nothing to indicate want; is therefore afraid to intimate to the inmates of the place the beneficent purpose of that poor Night Watch, or to make any overtures of the sort on his own behalf. Still his heart is swelling with the most generous promptings. He resolves to call again the same night, and if possible find some mode by which he can put his benevolent impulses into practice.

Ah ! little did he know what pinching poverty, what fearful want was concealed under that pleasing exterior. The old lady had just cooked the last morsel of food, that poor invalid had used the last grain of tea, and the last cup is quaffed in its crude state. The night before they had used the last candle, this morning burned the last piece of coal, and the last splinter of wood has been used to prepare that meager breakfast. Moreover, the last dime had been sent to the post-office, hoping the letter advertised might be the one so long looked for: but instead of which comes an insulting declaration from some roué of the city, who had heard of her marvelous beauty, and, as he asserted had seen her at the window.

Still the grandmother complains not; not a feeling of distrust finds an abiding place in that good old trusting bosom. The child is instructed to keep all a secret from his mother. But what are they to do ? The invalid must be kept warm. She must have nourishing diet, and above all, she must not be disturbed. After the old lady has waited on her children, and restored all things to their former tidy state, she sits down to deliberate. "I can not, I will not tax dear Minny, further. She has not only given us her sympathy, and her time, but her substance also. I must hide our present necessities from her, else will she take the bread from her own mouth to feed us."

"Grandma," says the child, "mamma has fallen asleep now, let me steal away and try to find something to do to make a few cents for you and her. Can't I work some, grandma?"

"Sweet darling, what sort of work could you do, with your baby hands? Sit down, child, God will help us again in his own good time. Remember, dear one, 'He feeds the young ravens, and clothes the lilies of the field, which toil not, neither do they spin.'"

So poor Clarence sat down and twirled his little cap,

and sung a little song. Yet that dear child scarce ate a morsel that morning, so fearful was he that he might be taking from his mother or grandmother.

Presently, Myra said, in a weary, faint voice, "Dear grandma, can't you give me a cracker, I think I could eat now."

The child knew there was not such a thing in the house. He goes up to his mother, kisses her affectionately, then slips out of the room. He runs on without seeming to have any definite object in view. The cold is pinching, and the tears are forced from that little Spartan soul. He still moves on; he will not beg, and he does not know where to ask for employment.

Presently, he comes to a large house against which a boy is pasting up bills. He stops and reads: "Wanted, a child about six years old, to take a simple part in the following plays, etc." While he stands there weeping, and reading by turns, the manager comes up.

"What's the matter, my little fellow?"

"I am reading this advertisement."

"Yes."

"I think I could do what is required here."

"Well?"

"And would like to engage, but my mother is starving and freezing to death at this moment, so that —"

"Oh yes: so are many others, my son. Still the public's maw must be catered to. Their appetites must be coaxed, if ten thousand mothers freeze and starve to death."

The child turned away. He had scarcely passed the angle of the wall before he is accosted by another person.

"How old are you, my little man?" said this stranger, taking his hand.

"Six years old, sir."

"Can you read, my dear, and sing?"

"Oh yes, sir."

"Then come with me." He leads him into the box-office; for that large, rambling old house is the theater, and that man is the first manager. When seated, he takes the child between his knees, and reads him the advertisement.

"Yes sir, I have just been reading it, and was thinking of asking for the place; but I can't wait for the pay;" and he burst into tears.

"Why, to-morrow morning is not so long, my son; then you shall have it."

The poor orphan looked at him, and then remembering the rebuff he had received from the man on the street, he hid his face between his hands and continued to weep.

"My little friend you shall have your pay, all in good time."

Clarence peeped over his hands at the speaker, and seeing nothing in his face but benevolence, sobbed out,

"O sir! by to-morrow my dear mother may be dead. She is starving and freezing to death, I fear, at this moment. If I do not find some way to make a few cents to carry home to her she will be gone. She has been very ill, and now needs a few little nice things, which we have not, and can't get. Dear sir, if you would only give me a little piece of money in advance, I promise you, upon the honor of a gentleman's son, that I will come back and work for you — bring coal, or wood, or do anything that is respectable."

"What then is your father's name, my child?"

Poor little Clarence hung down his head, looking troubled. "I don't want to say, sir. My mother don't wish me to speak."

The man dashed a tear from his own eyes, takes a sovereign from his pocket, gives it to the child, embraces him, and says, "I will trust to *that* gentleman's son, whoever he may be."

"I'll come back. Oh sir, I'll come back; if life is spared

me, I'll come back." He throws up his little cap, and shouts loudly, dancing about the floor, "huzza! huzza!" then darts into the street.

The man had watched him with an artist's eye, and marked him for his own.

"Why sir, that child will prove a treasure to us. He will bring us crowded houses for six months. Did you observe him, sir? He is the most beautiful and graceful creature I ever beheld. Besides, I think he has genius, and a decided vocation for the stage."

"Maybe so; we'll see," said the second manager.

Meantime Clarence had run all the way home; on reaching there he was almost exhausted. He found the old lady sitting where he left her; he falls into her arms and laughs wildly, at the same time showing her the money.

"Ah! dear child, didn't I say so?"

"Yes, indeed you did, grandma, and I begin to think that I am a sure-enough '*young raven*.' You know I've been *fed* so often. Will I begin to croak presently, mam?"

"God bless our beautiful treasure!"

In a moment after, he had fallen asleep on the floor. The old lady puts on her bonnet and shawl to go out for the purpose of laying in a stock of provisions. When she returns both mother and child are sleeping soundly and sweetly. She takes the boy up very tenderly, and places him on the bed.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SIREN.

"Oh! how the passions, insolent and strong,
Bear our weak minds their course along;
Make us the madness of their will obey,
Then die and leave us to our griefs a prey."

WE now return, after a lapse of some weeks, to the beautiful but haughty Miss Lindsay. During this interval she has had many alternations of feeling. Sometimes throwing off the incubus which hung over her, she gets the better of the mortification, grief, and chagrin induced by the seeming disdain of her lover; then she plunges into dissipation, and flirts with all sorts of men; listens to the impassioned love-making of the polished young dandy, Mr. Josiah Gaines; coquets with some dozen others, and in a fit of madness makes overtures to the Governor. But just as surely does she return home to weep and toss the whole night on that bed of thorns, made so by self-reproach and wounded pride.

She rarely now meets Col. Murray at any of those fashionable resorts. Sometimes he would glide by when she was engrossed with her frivolous pleasures; perhaps surrounded by her satellites, some ten or a dozen *things*, who, like moths, seek to buzz around the brightest light, thinking it honor enough to get their wings singed, and those little dried up things, which beat so faintly in the place where a heart ought to throb, scorched by that blaze of beauty, the reigning belle. Miss Gertrude Lindsay is worth half a million of dollars in her own right; is pretty, nay, I should rather say handsome; is stylish

and accomplished, and has received the most finished education in the French school of etiquette, with all the various and multifarious conventionalities appertaining thereto. She dresses magnificently. Her temper is imperious and exacting, nay, as despotic as an autocrat, where she can exercise power. She has great strength of will, and some strength of mind, when not overruled, or obscured by her passions, which are very violent. Her heart—well, her heart, we will leave that to the great “Searcher of hearts.”

When she would thus meet Murray in the giddy throng, he never seemed to notice or care what her pursuits were, or with whom she might be; but would smile faintly, bow slightly, and pass on, never stopping to speak.

Once she was so reckless, or forgetful of all true womanly dignity as to follow him, and slip a note into his hand. This note had been carefully prepared at home, artfully to bear the marks of haste and agitation, as an impromptu.

“DEAR CONRAD—In God’s name, what is the meaning of this treatment? What have I done? I challenge you to bring the charge. The merest culprit may meet his accusers and hope for justice, but I am doomed to endure a foretaste of the damned, without knowing wherefore. In an hour more I shall feign sickness (God knows it will be no feint: a real sickness of the heart I have at times). I shall presently brush off these mosquitoes, and return home. Meet me there in my boudoir. You must come, Charles. I find I can not live in this state of incertitude. Shall I expect you? or will you disappoint me again?

“P. S. Ann will meet you at the door.

GERTRUDE.”

Murray had withdrawn from the crowd, to read the

note, not with the whirlwind impatience of a lover, but with that chivalrous respect which every high-toned gentleman feels for the sex; together with a sense of duty, calling for a sacrifice of personal comfort for the time being, to the demands of any lady who might chance to need his attention. He smiled a little bit scornfully. "Poor Gertrude," thought he, "so proud, so arrogant to all others! Where is now your vaunted independence?"

He folded his arms, and was falling into abstraction, when he was roused by a commotion in the adjoining room. Presently a party of ladies and gentlemen came through the hall where he was standing. He caught a few words: "Hold up her head. Don't let her arms drag so. Mr. Gaines, don't hold her so tightly." Gertrude had fainted *really*, and Murray saw his affianced bride in the arms of the most consummate fop, and the veriest roué in the city — Messrs. Gaines and Calderwood. Her head was resting on the shoulder of the former, and as he turned his to speak to his co-worker in this labor of love, his lips came in contact with the alabaster forehead of the lady.

But Murray looked on without emotion; not a troubled wave of jealousy swept over his breast at the sight. He smiled, and maybe his luxuriant moustache did move with a little ripple of scorn.

They passed on. Then he leisurely walked to the cloak-room, takes his, wraps it about him, and without the least impatience wends his way to meet his lady-love. Oh! what mockery!

On arriving, Ann meets him at the street door. He is not suffered to ring the bell.

"Don't make a noise, please," says Ann.

"Why, is your mistress so ill?"

"I don't know, sir; she told me to say dat; now I done say it, I can't not follow up, and comprehend Miss Guttrude."

"Where is your master?"

The girl nodded toward his room.

Murray frowned darkly; all was explained. This was to be a clandestine meeting, and he was not pleased.

The girl opened her mistress's door very softly, and then vanished.

Now to any other man than the pre-occupied, unloving one before us, the scene which breaks on his vision would have been one of ravishing delight and bewilderment. The appointments of the lady's boudoir are in keeping with herself. Magnificent sofas, divans, chairs, etc., all of blue silk plush; curtains of cerulean hue, richly wrought in delicate colors, portraying classic scenes. A delicious perfume is breathed throughout the apartment. The gas is reduced, and made to send forth a mellowed light. Under that gorgeous burner stands a mosaic table, on which lay a few new works, all beautifully bound, with many other costly nothings. Here and there, and everywhere, are scattered letters in pink, blue, white, and even yellow embossed envelops, bearing on their backs the address of the elegant proprietor of this bower of enchantment.

The lady is reclining on the sofa, in the most approved attitude, it having been wheeled to the fire. She has exchanged her magnificent vestments of gauze, satin, lace, gold, and diamonds, for a more comfortable, but not less costly robe-de-chambre of delicate pink silk velvet. In removing the tiara of diamonds (worthy to press the brow of a princess) her hair has become unfettered, and now falls in rich masses over her neck and shoulders. She is pale, but still looking very regal; and to-night pretty. There is a softened expression, a languor, which is peculiarly becoming to some women. Her eyes are closed.

Murray stands looking at her, and for the first time there is a feeling stirring within his bosom akin to pas-

sion for that splendid creature, who is so certainly his own whenever he chooses to appropriate her. "While the lover is gazing at the lovely picture, surprised at his own emotions, he notes two big tears force their way from under the closed lids, and roll down her cheeks."

"Ann, has Conrad come yet? Oh! How tardy he is? I would have flown to him, did he permit me."

"I am here, Gertrude," said Murray, approaching her. She starts up with an exclamation of irrepressible joy.

"Oh! I have waited so long, and have wished so much for this hour!" Leaning on her elbow, she weeps in silence. The large oriental sleeve has fallen back and reveals the bare arm to the shoulder. That arm is beautiful—it might have furnished the model for the Greek slave.

He sits down by her, takes her hand, and presses it gently, then carries it to his lips. The conversation now ensues, which is related in part (with many variations) by the lady's maid, to Miss Moggy Ann Carns—with due allowance for the inventive genius of all negro slaves. This time there are gross discrepancies, and an astonishing mistake of time and place.

"Conrad! you have ceased to love me. How have I offended you? Why do you thus evermore neglect and avoid me?"

"Cease all upbraiding, Gertrude. In sooth, I'm in no mood to listen."

"Oh, God! cold as ever! Will nothing move that flinty heart? Would I were dead? If I have outlived your love, Murray, I do not prize existence, and will throw it from me." She weeps again, and wringing her hands, adds:

"Tell me at once—let me know—whether I am thus wretched?" She takes his hand again, which in her violent excitement she had thrown from her, and looks pleadingly into his face.

Col. Murray withdraws it, rises to his feet, and folds his arms, looking proudly down on her.

"Gertrude, have I ever told you I loved you? Have I for one moment deceived you in this? Have I not rather always said, that my heart was withered, shriveled like a dried leaf just ready to fall? Blame me not—I have no spirit, no feelings to meet your ardent nature. I am pained to think that yours are squandered on a soulless man."

She takes his hand again, and exclaims passionately—

"I care not! I do not love you less for this," pressing his fingers to her lips.

"Come, come, Gertrude, do not waste such fine sentimentality upon me. Refrain, I beseech you. Do you not see that I am as impassive as marble; cold and incensate, blind to all such things, as the poor mole that burrows beneath the earth?"

The lady covers her face with her hands and sobs out—

"Then will you leave me to die? Will you cast me off and desert me again?"

"No, Gertrude, I intend to comply with that marriage contract. As I am pledged so will I fulfill. I have this day renewed this promise to my mother, whose heart seems to be set on the alliance. I can not tell wherefore, but she seems to desire, with a feverish impatience, to witness our happiness: that is, your happiness and my prosperity."

"Miss Lindsay" (said he, now seating himself by her), "I could never understand why you should descend from your lofty pedestal, where so many adorers offer daily that incense which is so acceptable to all pretty women, and thus condescend to accept such a poor shattered man as I am. In spirit, person, and fortune, I am broken. Yet would you bestow yours, all unimpaired, on this wreck. How is this? Why are our parents so anxious to have us united? Why would your proud father, who knows my

dark history, give his queenlike daughter, with all her charms, beside countless thousands of that dross which is so worshiped in the world, to a man who is bankrupt in all these, and whose heart even, has stopped payment for such a length of time?"

"Oh! I do not know! I can not say anything about it. I only know, that I love you in spite of every discouragement, that my heart is no longer in my own keeping, and that I am yours — soul, body, and fortune. Then, if I can not be your wife I'll be your slave — your *anything* — so that I may be allowed to remain near you, to see you, to wait on you, and sometimes to embrace you."

The calm, cold man was conquered. He sat down on a low seat at the feet of this reckless woman, took her hand, pressed it with more fervency than he had ever done before; carried to his lips those beautiful taper fingers; talked to her in a low, soothing voice; then rising, said, "Well, Gertrude, you shall have your own way about it. Appoint the day, and let it be an early one: but have no undue parade. My mother's illness will be a sufficient reason to your friends for not making a *fete*. Let it take place, and make yourself, my mother, and your father happy. As to myself I am a wretch, and do not deserve the tenth part of this devotion."

He has said adieu; has once more kissed a good night on those rosy tips, and departs: but turns to gaze again at his voluptuous-looking bride. Ah! why did he turn back? It never was well to do so; "better to have been changed to a pillar of salt" at once, than to meet that array of charms so seductive. Poor man! thy future is full of dark spots! But he did look back, and human nature is human nature. The lady was smiling placidly — happiness had made her face radiant. Now her countenance is glowing and beautiful, beaming with love for him. He knows this, he feels it. He returns, falls on one knee before her, embraces her wildly, kisses her hands, her

forehead, her cheeks, her lips, many times, then rushes from the room.

As he passes from the presence of the Circe, he finds the door ajar, and in the distance, perceives Ann gliding away. But what cares he now? For the first time, for many years, he is under the domination of passion. He is wild, and the hot blood is coursing through his veins; he believes his present delirium is a presage of love, the harbinger of happiness. Beware, young man! There are two kinds of the same thing: the pure and the dross, the sentiment of love and the passion. Try them both in the crucible of reason; test them in the alembic of time.

To-morrow morning when you shall awake from your slumbers — maybe dreams of Elysium — compare your present, forced, exuberant emotions with the fervent, steadfast, self-immolating love which you have felt even from childhood, for the ill-fated Marianna, your soul's idol.

When Col. Murray left the Siren, he hurried on, as he thought, homeward; still under the influence of passion, he walked on heedless of all things, and only roused up to find that he was traveling at that tremendous pace in the opposite direction. He turns, and in retracing his steps, finds himself before that humble abode of the hapless Myra.

"Ha! I meant not this (he closes his eyes). I must not do anything unworthy of Charles Murray. Let her be what she may now, when she becomes my wife, she shall then be exalted. All other idols must be shivered, when I place her by my hearthstone, where no traitor, false husband, or craven lover ever dwelt. I will be true. Oh, yes, I will at least be honest; every man has it in his power to be that: but I will also do my utmost to requite her mighty love. My poor Gertrude!" He enters his house.

When Miss Lindsay found herself alone, she threw off

that gentle languor, which was so pleasing to her lover, but which had been sustained with so much trouble and fatigue to herself. She jumps up from her recumbent attitude, throws her beautiful arms aloft, and cries, in an ecstacy of triumphant delight,

"Oh! I am so happy—I have had him at my feet—joy! joy! joy! I have played my part, and 'heaven is won!'"

Ann, coming into the room, unintentionally upsets a chair.

"Ha! are you there, Ann? How long have you been in the room?"

"I jest come, Miss Guttrude—jest this minit."

"Ann, you are a liar by nature; but tell me a lie now, at the peril of your black hide, and I'll have it peeled off. How long have you been a witness to what was passing in this room?" Then that gentle, melting, loving lady jerks up a chair with Amazonian strength, and advances toward the girl with the intent to strike her down. The negro dodges and runs out of the room.

"Now I've done for myself again. Fool! fool! fool! that I am evermore. If she should leave me, and tell this thing where Murray should hear it! And this she'll be certain to do, for she is the devil incarnate. I must propitiate her—my own slave. I who, this night, have had a *sovereign* at my feet, must now descend to coax my own negro! Oh, what a world! What a world this is!"

She goes to the door and calls the maid, who replies—"Yes, m-a'a-m, I'm coming." No sound was ever so welcome—the music of the spheres could not have been hailed or listened to with more delight.

"Ann, come here to your Miss Girty. Why did you go out, girl?"

"Because, Miss Guttrude, I thought you was gwine to kill me wid dat cheer."

"Ann, you are a fool! Did I ever kill you with a chair?"

The girl takes up her apron, and begins to go through the motion of crimping the hem between her finger and thumb, and looking askance at the lady, answers with a grin, "Y-e-s, m-a'a-m."

"Well! I didn't mean to do it this time, any how. Now tell me what you heard and saw, while you were listening there."

"I aint not been listening, Miss Gutty. Now you may ask Robert ef I wasn't a gallivanting wid him."

"With Robert? What business have you with Robert, girl?"

"Oh, me!" cries Ann; now following up the process of crimping the other side of her apron, and looking out at the corners of her eyes, "We's, we's sweethearts, mam."

"Oh, is that it?" A sudden thought strikes this intriguante. "Do you love him, Ann; and does he love you?"

"Yes, mam, we does dat?"

"Do you know that you both belong to me, child?"

"Yes, mam, I knows I does, but I thought Robert b'long to master."

"No, he and you are both my slaves, and if you will be a faithful, good girl, and quit lying, I'll let you get married, and I'll give you a nice wedding the same night that we are married."

"Thank you, Miss Gutty," said the negro girl, making a low courtesy: but is you gwine to git married, sure'nough, mam? Oh, I'm so glad. And will you let Robert and me stand up before de same Hymenial halter?"

"If you behave yourself, and please me. Now tell me what you heard and saw from that door."

"Lawsy me! you got back to dat agin, mam. Now, 'fore God! Miss Gutty, you's hard on dis poor nigger. I tell you, mam, I had jest got in de room, and I hear you say, 'Oh! I done play de part; joy! joy! and heaven is

won.' So I thought, being as how you was sick to-night, prehaps you was gwine to die. Then I so 'stonished, and so glad—no, I mean so sorry—dat I jest 'advertently set up dat cheer down on de floor. And now dis is de truph, de whole truph, and nothin' but de truph; so help me everybody. Amen."

"What made you think about dying, just then, Ann?"

"Oh nothing, mam; only de Mefodist ministerial tells us dat it's only through de shadow and valley of death dat we can arrive at the gates; so I s'pose you was gwine dat way of course. But maybe Miss Gutty you got some new way to enter dat kingdom-come? Is you, mam?"

The lady laughed, and retired to her room, closing the door after her. Ann busied herself for a short time in adjusting the room, muttering all the time to herself, with an occasional little giggle, "Ha, ha, he, he, he! Maybe she think she gwine git to heaven when she marry wid dat proud colonel! Aye! but wont she miss de right road? Phew! I wouldn't not be in *h-e-r p-l-a-c-e*. I wouldn't—that's all. Phew! but wont he make her walk de chalk line? Phew! he, he, he!"

When she has restored all things to their original order, she goes in to disrobe her imperial mistress. Ann was proud of her lady, although she had not much love for her. Those very qualities which were so distasteful to Murray, and all other good persons, only enhanced her value in the eyes of the slave. She found Miss Lindsay sitting there, waiting to be undressed—which she had never done for herself in the whole course of her life. We leave them together. Oh what a brace! It is Satan pitted against Satan.

CHAPTER XV.

THE JEW PEDDLER.

“THE miser lives alone, abhorred by all,
Like a disease ; yet can not so be 'scaped,
But canker-like eats through the poor men's hearts
That live about him.”

“ Of age's avarice I could never see
What color, ground, or reason there should be.”

THERE is a large, tall, quaint-looking brick house standing in a distant part of the city from the places where we have been. This tenement shelters, and conceals in its unnumbered apartments, nooks, and crannies, a sufficient number of human beings to form a colony. A small, wretched, dirty, doleful-looking room, immediately under the roof is tenanted by the owner of the whole house — nay, whole square. Its walls are rude and unplastered ; the few panes of glass in the one little window which are not broken, are almost entirely darkened by rime and cob-webs, and the holes are stopped with rags, brown paper and old hats. The winter winds whistle through the crevices of door, window, ceiling and floor. The furniture consists of two chairs without backs, a little table, and a very ricketty, dilapidated cot, or couch. A heap of rubbish is piled up in one corner : old rusty, broken fenders, parts of bedsteads, chairs, candlesticks, pitchers, plates, a mass of filthy-looking coverlets, pieces of carpets, also some old greasy wearing apparel. It is impossible to conceive of the gloom and squalor of this place, and the imagination could scarce paint such a scene.

A few coals are blazing in a very small grate, on one side of which is a large hair-trunk, having as fastenings three bands of iron, and a huge padlock. This trunk is almost concealed by an old cloak. On it is seated the presiding genius of the place—a little, old, shrunken, shriveled, mummy-looking man. His eyes are small, and peer out from under his gray, shaggy brows so fiercely, that on meeting them you experience the same involuntary shudder which passes through the frame when encountering the eye of a snake, or any other venomous beast. Ever and anon he turns those eyes to the door, and then again to the fire, and spreads out his lean, lank, claw-like fingers over the little blaze: then again turns to the door, and sighs, and mutters to himself.

“Why don’t she come? I’m starving! Oh! what is de matter mit de gal? Oh! I wants to see her, mine own comely shild!” Again he sends a piercing glance to the door. “Oh, oh, oh! something has happened to mine shild! Oh! Fadder Abraham! them Christian dog has taken mine comely shild captive.” He plucks off his cap, and, after the primitive manner of his people, sprinkles ashes on his head and weeps.

The door opens: a girl enters, muffled up to the eyes in a cloak and hood, with a green veil thrown over her head. Coming up to that unsightly old man, she throws her arms around his neck and kisses him.

“Oh! now thank the God of Isaacs, and Jacob, and all the oder fadders! But where is mine monish? Where is ——”

“Father, it is very cold to-day. It is almost ——”

“Where is mine monish, I say? — Tell me dat. Where ——”

“Father, I did my best, but I could not succeed this time.”

“Why, den, shild, couldst thou not collect mine dues?”

“They are all sick; sick almost unto death, father.”

"Didst thou ask dem, for what is mine own? Didst—"

"Come, father, kiss thy poor little Leah. She has done all she could with honor." He leans forward, and that young, fresh, sweet child of nature entwines her arms around the neck of that old, repulsive piece of parchment, and returns the kiss with affection. He is the first to disengage himself, saying, "Now, shild, you shall tell thy fadder all about it. When shall I get mine monish?"

"Father, I have brought thee something nice for thy dinner." She opens a napkin and shows him a piece of meat and a few sausages. He starts back with apparent dismay.

"Out upon thee for a bad shild! to fetch thy poor old fadder swine to eat! Fadder Abraham! dem Nazarene has turned the shild's head. By all the patriarchs! I'll, I'll —"

"Oh! hush, father; threaten me not. It is worse than idle to do so. But, poor father, thou art greatly mistaken; it is beef, good beef, made up by my order for thee." Poor old man! thou wouldest sooner put to death a Christian than eat a piece of their pork."

"Then, shild, come fry me a little bit of it. Thy father is almost famished. Stop, stop! where didst thou get the monish to buy dem nice meat, Leah? Now may Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all de oders assist me! Leah, if thou hast let dem Christian dogs look upon thy face, and hast pleased dem, so dat they give thee dat filthy lucre, and hast tempted dem to find the way to thy fadder's hiding place, I'll, I'll lock thee up in dis trunk," beating the ends of it with his bony fingers.

The girl did not reply, but proceeded to remove the cloak and hood. When she had done so, she turned to her father, who grinned his admiration.

"Yes, I see; just like thy mother; comely, as was Rachel of old." The old man spoke most truly. The girl was as beautiful as the poet's dream.

Now that divine creature hunts about among the rubbish until she finds a skillet in which she pours a little oil, then placing the fragments of meat and a couple of links of sausage in it, sets it on the fire, where it begins to fry. Bringing a large onion, she proceeds to slice it very nicely, and putting the pieces also into the skillet, sits and watches the process of browning, turning every piece carefully. When all is nicely cooked, she dishes it up in a tin plate, places it on the little table, and moves it up to her father's side, having also set down a loaf of bread, some salt in a broken teacup, and an old, rusty, tin pepper-box. This finished, she goes again to the mass of rubbish, and pulls out a stone jug, from which she fills a tin cup with some sort of liquor—hands it to the old man, then replaces the bottle, covering it up as before.

The old creature eats voraciously, while his beautiful daughter stands by, napkin in hand, and ministers to him.

A little bell tinkles. He starts as if he had been caught in the commission of crime.

"Here, shild, put away dese tings ; thy fadder is very poor, thou knowest. He can not afford to feed on flesh and drink Hock. Don't mine shild understand her own fadder ?" In a moment, as if by magic, every dainty disappeared, leaving only the loaf of bread and pitcher of water.

"Come in," says a voice so feeble and quavering that you would have supposed it issued from the lips of one just "going off." "Come in," and as Tivvy entered, Leah disappeared most mysteriously. She was in the act of hanging up an old coat, when, in the twinkling of an eye, she seemed to amalgamate with the cloth ; for when the negro came to the fire, she found the old man alone, sitting as at first, on the trunk.

"How do you do, old Fire and Faggot ?" says Tivvy.

"Good morning, lady. How is thyself?" whined out a little, plaintive voice.

"Oh! I don't know; I suppose bad enough, Faggot. But when I place my sitiuation along side o' this, I reckon it's very good, and easy, and comfortable like."

"Yes, lady; nobody is so bad off as old Mordecai Faggot, the Jew peddler. I is very poor; very poor is poor old Faggot."

"Well, I've come for you, Mordecai, rich or poor, I've come for you, so make ready."

"Ah! mine Got! who wants poor old Faggot? I tell thee, ma'am, I is not able to go. Oh! oh! I is not able."

"You'll have to go; you dare not disobey."

"Who wants me, den?"

"Faggot, *your* mistress and mine, wants you."

"Who? who is dat? Who does want me?"

"Why *she* wants you. Do you know now? Anyhow you've got to go, that's flat, even if you can't walk."

"Fadder Abraham! Well, I must try. I know it is death by de law to desobey *her*." He rises with great difficulty, and totters to an old cloak on the wall, and tries to disengage it from the peg, but fails. "Fadder Jacob, I is so mighty weak I can't do nothin' at all." Tivvy gives him the cloak, turning up her nose at the noisome condition of it.

"Now, thou must go on, my lady, and tell *her* I is coming."

"Oh! but she told me not to leave you, Faggot."

"Run on, run on; goot gal, I is comin'!"

"Now, old Mordecai Faggot—'the Jew peddler,' you call yourself, don't you? do you want your soul left in the inside o' that old dried up hull of a body o' yours?"

"To be sure I does."

"Then don't you disappoint *her*. And if you love anything in this world (beside that old hair-trunk, what sets there full o' money), and wants it saved, then don't you come into that front door."

"Oh! oh!" said he, dropping down again on the

trunk, and trying covertly to conceal it with his cloak, "I is got no monish ; nobody is so poor as Mordecai Faggot, the Jew. I is 'fraid somethin' will happen to me. Oh ! oh ! "

" You are afraid something will happen to the gold in that trunk ; that's about it. That *iron-bound* trunk there," said Tivvy, peeping round mischievously. " Great padlock, too."

" Oh ! oh ! oh ! I is betrayed ! I is betrayed ! "

" Old Faggot, you are a fool ! Now, just as soon as it gits little bit darker, you come right along. I'm not going to walk the streets with you — but you had better make haste."

Tivvy left, closing the door. In an instant it was double locked. And now, that feeble, miserable, decrepid old wretch disappears, and in his stead there stands a smart, active, bustling little man, about half the age of the poor old Faggot, who sat there a moment ago. The first thing he did was to tug at the trunk. Finding it secure, he brought a bundle of rags and covered it over. He walks briskly about the room, arranging many things until it is quite dark. Then he again puts on his old cloak and cap, and the same aged, white-haired man totters from the house. Having made fast the door like the trunk with a strong padlock, he passes feebly and cringingly, on his way to that lordly mansion.

On his route he receives many a hiss and malediction. If he, by accident, jostles even a negro, the words he is forced to hear are, "*Cussed* Jew, don't tetch me ! Nigger as I is, I wouldn't be *you*." And as he is rudely thrust off, he comes in contact with some blustering, swaggering member of the mushroom aristocracy, who as fiercely throws him back, exclaiming, with assumed wrath, "Damned usurer ! stand off !" Then again, that snaky sound issues from groups of boys.

This was excoriation to the feelings of that abject look-

ing man. Yet he plods on humbly, without once raising his head. Those little fiery eyes gleam from under his penthouse brows, with a lurid and ominous fire; but he makes no resistance, and seems not to heed. Yet all these wrongs are written on his heart with a red-hot steel pen, which can only be washed out by the blood and tears of his enemies. His soul burns to wreak his vengeance on all Christians—the foes of his race.

“Poor old Jew, I am sorry for thee! Thou wert not so bad at first; but now thy evil passions are inflamed, and thou art ready to commit crimes, and waiting only for a day of power to sweep them from the face of the earth. That creeping, cringing, crawling thing would have, with fire and sword, slain every follower of Christ. All his secret stores—his hoarded gold—were set apart, and consecrated in his mind to this great and righteous work of retributive justice. Therefore to rob, to distress, to torture (but not to kill) secretly all who came in his way was, in his eyes, a virtue, and became the fixed purpose of his life. It was done remorselessly, for conscience sake; religiously believing it to be a sacred duty incumbent on him to avenge his people. Superadded to this, was avarice, in its most repulsive form—its most ghastly shape. And this was the counselor and coadjutor of the aristocratic Mrs. Murray.

When Faggot arrived at the alley which communicated with the offices of the establishment, he exclaims in a low and angry growl, “Mine Got! it is as dark as de devil here.”

“Hist! hist!” said Tivvy, “follow me.”

She then conducted him up a back stairway, then through a narrow, dark corridor to *her* door. She opens it softly, pushes him in, shuts it, and goes off to gossip and make love to James, Col. Murray’s valet.

The old lady is quite recovered, and is again arrayed in all her youthful charms. The Jew, thus suddenly forced

into the presence of this woman, who had for forty years exercised such unbounded influence over him, trembled from head to foot. He cowered beneath those keen, cold eyes. No salutation is passed between them. Such is not the custom with the lady toward her tool. He stands there in her presence with those white locks uncovered.

"Well, Jew, you have come? 'Tis well," said the lady, looking disdainfully at him.

"Yes, mine lady, I is here." Another painful pause. He adds, "Mine lady sent for her servant. What does she want mit him?"

"I sent for you, Faggot, because I have work fit for your hands only. Now, tell me, Mordecai, what usury you will extort for doing a service which will afford you as much pleasure as me profit?"

"Oh! I does not know, mine lady; dat will depend on the nature of the servish. If thou wilt tell thy servant, then he can judge."

"In the first place, Mordecai, my son has fallen into the strangest mood. He neither talks, laughs, eats, nor sleeps."

"Oh! mine God! den what does he do? Jest nothing at all. Well, now dat is bad; he can't live long at dem rate."

"Wretch! How dare you interrupt me? Keep your wizen jaws closed; else, by heaven, I'll have them slit from ear to ear."

"I begs thy pardon," says the poor old creature, dropping his head on his breast. "Go on, my lady, if it please thee."

"Well, every evening he leaves home about nine o'clock, is gone two hours, then comes back to pace the room the whole night; I wish to know where he goes, and how he passes that interval."

"Oh! dat is easy enough done; I knows where he goes now."

Then she spoke some words in a low whisper. The Jew starts, and raises his little red hot eyes to her face. All this time she has kept the feeble old man standing. Now she says in a condescending tone :

" Mordecai, sit down ; I have a great deal to say to you about our business."

He sits down, meekly folding his arms, and casting his eyes to the floor.

" Faggot, didn't you swear to me solemnly that Marianna Glencoe was dead ? And didn't I make you a title to the very house which shelters you now, for the commission of that one deed, which was only the keenest enjoyment to such a blood-sucker as you are ? "

" Yes, mine lady, you did," said he, grinning, thereby disclosing very white, sharp teeth.

" Is she dead, or not ? " Once for all I ask you, and I want the truth."

The Jew moved uneasily in his chair, and said nervously, " Mine Got ! The goot lady raves."

" Speak out, base Israelite ; else shall you not live to see your ill-gotten hoards again."

" Well, now, did not mine lady see for herself, and not for anoder, dat she was dead ? Didn't she see de coffin let down into de ground her own self, mit her own keen eyes ? "

" I thought so, miscreant ; but something has occurred, some very strange things have turned up to awaken suspicion, and ——"

" Oh ! mine Got ! Den I'll hide ; I'll run away. Oh ! Oh ! ——"

" No, sir, you shall not. You stand your ground and do my bidding ; do you hear me, sir ? "

" Yes, mine lady, I does."

" Now, tell me, Faggot, who that beautiful stranger is, occupying that old hovel way down Market street ? "

Then he required her to describe the place very mi-

nutely, all the time looking innocent and ignorant. But if the lady had been using those handsome eye-glasses, she would have seen that his ghastly face suddenly became livid.

"Jew, I suspect you acted the traitor in that matter toward me, but it can't be helped now; beware how you repeat it. Aye, beware! I am induced to think that that mysterious person is no other than the dead Marianna, and it is there my son goes every night. Now, I want you to hang on his steps, day and night. Dog him to his hiding place. Contrive some way to introduce yourself into the house of that woman; pry into her private life; establish a *spy* there, and speedily report to me. If you find it as I suppose, then she must be removed. Do you hear, sir?"

"Say on, lady."

"Now listen to me, and heed me well! Some dark night a fire breaks out in the center of those old wooden houses. Many persons perish, but if *she*, if Marianna Glencoe is saved by some accursed intermeddling arm, then she must be spirited away. Such things do happen, but they are familiar only to spirits like you and your twin brother, the devil."

The old man sits looking straight on before him, as if he were gazing far into futurity.

"Do you understand, Jew? Do you hear me, Israelitish dog? What are you staring at? have you turned to stone?"

"I see, mine lady, damage and death to mine own self. The goot God of Jacob said, 'Thou shalt do no murder.' I can't."

"Fool! it is too late to talk thus. How many festering sores and foul stains are already hid away in your craven heart?"

She takes from a drawer a Morocco casket, touches a spring, and displays to the dazzled eyes of the Jew pawn-

broker several valuable diamonds. She watches with a curious eye the effect.

"Now, Faggot, if you will again get that girl out of the way, remove her secretly, put her away securely this time, all these shall be yours."

"Oh! ah! oh! A thousand monish worth. I'll do it; I'll do it."

"But when?"

"Jest so soon as I can get de wires to work," said the Jew, now rubbing his hands as if they itched to get hold of the gems.

"Go now, and see after Murray, but beware of detection. Faggot, were he to catch you in this dastardly business, he would make no more of wringing off your head than my cook would that of the chicken's for breakfast."

"I knows it; but now, mine honored lady, what surely wilt thou give to old Faggot that thou wilt keep thy word to him?"

The lady straightened herself up, and looked contemptuously down on the poor cringing creature beneath her. "My word, sir; my pledged word. When did I break it?"

He shakes his head doubtfully.

"Fool! wretch! dog! what is the matter? What do you want? What sort of security? Would you have a witness to this compact?"

"Jest thy name, lady, only a few line—write thy name on little scrap o' paper."

"I do not understand you, Mordecai."

"Put down, in black and white, dat thou promise to deliver to me thy diamonds when certain servishes is done (naming them), and den thy name."

"It is very strange! You never demanded any such note of me before?" said she, uneasily.

"No, lady; but all tings is so uncertain now; let it

be so." He takes from his pocket a little old ink-horn and pen. "Here write, lady."

She seems by some strange impulse, moved to obey the dictation of him, who for such a series of years has been to her the servilest of slaves. She writes—

"I promise to pay over to Mordecai Faggot my morocco case of diamonds, when he brings me the opal ring worn by Marianna Glencoe. GERALDINE MURRAY."

She read it aloud. Faggot frowned, and knit his shaggy brows until they met together over his nose, bringing in fearful juxtaposition those little serpent-like eyes.

"Will that do?" said the lady, looking at him with surprise.

"Yes! goot night;" and he went creeping off. Tivvy conducted him out through the same secret way. When they reached the blind alley, she said—

"Well, old Fire and Faggot, who got the best of it this time, Satan or the Devil?"

"Oh gal, don't mention it. She always does work out her own purposes. But I is got her name, and if she betrays old Faggot, and brings him to de halter, he'll have good company. Dat little scrap o' paper will fix her bisness too. Dat's all."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEOPHYTE ACTOR.

“O LORD! my boy, my Arthur, my fair son;
My life, my joy, my soul, my all the world;
My widow’s comfort and my sorrow’s care!”

“Thanks to the gods, my boy has done his duty.”

WHEN Clarence awoke from that deep sleep, the day was well-nigh spent. It was the mystic hour of twilight, when poor busy, toiling, scheming human nature may snatch a few moments of repose. The child’s first sensation was that of intense hunger. (Remember, that poor little boy had tasted nothing but a crust throughout the day.) His first thought was of his mother, then his grandmother; after that his little mind reverted to the humane manager. Seeing it was almost dark, he began to cry.

“Oh! I am ruined! I’m disgraced! I’ve told him a lie. I must go to him this moment.”

He then approached his mother’s bedside, and finding her so much improved, looking so well, and beautiful as he thought, that in his joy he forgot his griefs. The dear good Minny was standing by, holding a waiter, which contained a few delicacies intended to tempt a failing appetite. The odor of these dishes seem to whet the keen edge of the boy’s hunger, and he is about to ask Minny for a portion of the nice things when the old lady entered (like a good fairy the night before Christmas) bearing a great tea-board loaded down with the comforts of a substantial meal. It was soon spread out. Then the grandmother,

Minny, and Clary surrounded it. After the thanksgiving, that little circle make themselves happy, nay joyous.

"Now, come my bonny bairn, and tell your ain lassie, who was sae kind-hearted as to gie ye the siller?"

"Oh! dear Minny, that brings to mind what I had again forgotten. I owe it all to the good man at the old theater. I must run off this minute. Come, Minny lassie, and help me to don my 'martial cloak.'"

"The puir chiel is demented! Ye must nae go there, deary."

"You shall not go!" said the grandmother; and her honest brows were corrugated with a frown of disapprobation.

"My sweet bairn, ye canna find your way in the dark."

"I must try, dear Minny; don't say a word. I have promised, upon the honor of a gentleman's son, to go back. My word is out; and would you have me prove myself not what I said I was?"

"You shall not stir from this house! You are now poor baby! broken down by toil and hardships, and your young heart has already known more sorrow than falls to the lot of most middle-aged men," rejoined the old lady, wiping her eyes.

"Yes, I know all that, grandma; but as yet there is no stain on it; and, thank God, I have never told a lie in my life. Would you compel me now to tell one, mam?" and that brave little man shuddered at the bare idea of doing a mean action.

He went up to his mother, and whispered to her earnestly for a short time. After which Myra called Minny to her. "The child must go, Minny; if you, or I either, were in his place, we would desire to do like him. Wrap him up, dear girl, and start him off as speedily as possible."

"What, alone! Nae, nae—I canna do that."

"No, Minny, not alone. God will be with him. He has never forsaken that child yet; but I think, has

watched over him for her sake (pointing to her grandmother), and has fed him from time to time, and brought him back in safety. My boy has never yet been forced to beg, thank God."

"Aweel, aweel. It is only the truth ye ha' spoken—I have never seen the righteous forsaken, or their seed begging bread,'" says Minny, with pious fervor.

While speaking she had busied herself in wrapping up the child; then putting on her own cloak and bonnet, says to him, " Go kiss your mother and grandam, darling, and let us be off." On turning she comes up against Doctor Brown, who had been an unnoticed spectator of the scene.

" Good-bye, Doctor," says the child, and pulling Minny off they leave the house.

He finds the old lady in tears, but this time Myra seems sustained by some invisible power. Presently they make him sit down and partake of their *banquet*. Mrs. Wise, the elder, pours out for him a cup of the best tea, places before him the most savory chop, with the lightest, shortest, and hottest of biscuit. The good little doctor thought he had never eaten anything so delicious; he sipped his tea, and ate his supper with a gusto unknown to the hang-ers-on of hotels and restaurants. But he is troubled by the silent sorrow of the old lady, who from time to time wipes her eyes.

" Oh, madam! you should not grieve thus; you should not worry about this thing. It is all for the best, as sure as you are born. That child has revealed this day the germs of great genius, as well as an exalted sense of honor—in short, powers far beyond his years. I stood by, an unperceived spectator, and listened with the profoundest admiration to the boy's remarks and arguments."

" Well! maybe so. But I don't like prodigies; they never make quiet, useful citizens. Besides, it is throwing the child, so tender, and unformed as he is, into the very

jaws of Satan, to send him to that terminus of vice, shame, and crime."

"Tut, tut," says the doctor, and he looks over at the invalid. A faint smile is flitting over that sweet face. Then he rejoins :

"Glory, glory, madam, and fame! Think of that; in one week that boy's name will be heralded half over the New World."

"God forbid! I would not have his right mind perverted, and his pure soul blurred by what he must meet with there. God forbid that my child should be elevated through the instrumentality of those play-house hell-hounds."

Myra looked troubled, but still tried to smile, while she spoke in an apologetic voice :

"My grandmother is very primitive in her views, generally, and on this one subject is rabid. Her knowledge of the world has not kept pace with this age of improvement. Once a fearful misfortune befell a member of her family, the origin of which she traced back to the theater. Hence her apparent rancor."

The door opens, and Minny enters. Now she is introduced in form to Doctor Brown. She sits down by him, looking up child-like into his face.

"I thank ye, Doctor, for filling my vacant place here by the ingleside." Her countenance is beaming with satisfaction and benevolence.

Reader, we have told you that Minny was not pretty : we retract that slander. Such a combination of elements as we find here, must make lovely much plainer features than her's. She has a rich, sort of creamy-looking skin, if I may so express myself, which pales or flushes with her emotions, grey eyes, and very dark brown hair.

She is of medium stature, and remarkably well formed, lithe, and brisk, and active as an antelope. Yet we have called her little Minny, because the impression made on

every beholder at first is, that she is small, and very young. There is such a quaint simplicity about her, such a bewitching naturalness, candor and truth, such innocence, that we can but associate the winning graces of childhood with our good little Minny Dun.

While she recounts her trip to the theater, Doctor Brown looks on with a pleased admiration. Myra, who is quick-sighted in all the devious ways of the heart, marks it all down on the tablets of her memory to be brought up sometime, perhaps with benefit to her friend.

"Well, Minny, did you thrust the poor young thing into that den of wild-beasts, thieves, robbers and murderers?"

"Oh, niver fash, niver fash, grandam, nae harm will come to the sweet bairn. Fix your trust above, then none can mak' afraid," said Minny, kindly taking her hand.

"You are back early, Miss Dun; did you run for your life, all the way?" said the doctor.

"Nae, nae. I had to gang but a little way before we met that good creature Murdoch, who turned back with us, and seeing that the child wished to hie along so fast, he taks him up in his arms, and carries him a' the way. It was a lang weary '*road to ruin*' this time, grandam," said Minny, laughing merrily.

"That dear, good-hearted, honest fellow, took the bairn, as I said, in his arms, and they kept up a running conversation a' the way. Clarry placed his little arm around the neck of that coarse bear-skin, and thus we reached the theater. But many times the drap was in my een to see with what tenderness that rough-coated man treated the bairn;" and little Minny wiped her eyes again.

"Go on, Minny," said Myra.

"Yes, but dear lady, there is na much mair to tell. Murdoch went wi' us to a place they call the box-office, and left the bairn in my care while he gaes to seek the manager. When he comes back, I just kissed the sweet

mou' o' the bonny bairn, and taks my leave; but all the time I kept looking back to see how the puir chiel would stand sic an ordeal. At last I saw the handsome Mr. Gooch come in. Clarry rises, pulls off his little cap, and bows politely; just as much sae as that grand Colonel Murray could have done to save his life."

At that name Myra starts visibly, and becomes very pale.

"Go on, Minny," said she, in a tremulous voice.

"Well, the man bows, too, and says, 'All hail young prince!' and then shaking his dear little hand, adds, 'Welcome! most welcome! Duke of York—that is to be.'"

Now Minny rises to depart. Dr. Brown offers his arm, and they make their adieux. On going out, they discover a huge mass of cloth and coarse furs leaning against the post. It moves off; a moment after is heard in the distance the sonorous voice of the Night Watch, crying, "Past nine o'clock! all's well."

"That's the only lie the man utters," said Dr. Brown, for the twelth time.

"Aweel, he thinks o' na harm until he sees it before his een," replied Minny.

On reaching the little toy shop, she unlocks the door, and invites the doctor to enter. An invincible curiosity takes hold of him to see the good little creature's home—her little fireside. He follows her in. After passing through the shop they enter that delicious little sitting-room; and there sits the venerable figure, in that same old stuffed and wadded arm-chair. She seems to be dozing. Minny calls her very loudly, for she is quite deaf:

"Grandmither, let me introduce you to Dr. Brown, Mrs. Wise's physician."

The old lady extends her hand and says, with due courtesy, "I am happy to see ye, doctor. Ye are welcome to our ingleside."

This old woman possessed an innate politeness, which seems to belong to all good-hearted, truly pious persons. The genuine religion of Jesus Christ induces this, I think, without any other training.

The doctor remembering the lateness of the hour, rises to take his leave. Approaching Minny, he says:

"Miss Dun, I was this morning entrusted with a commission, which troubles me. I think, perhaps, you can help me out." (Dr. Brown had rightly divined the prominent traits in the girl's character; which were decision, common sense, and practicality.) "That same 'bear-skin man' gave me this," said he, pulling out a purse, "which he wishes appropriated to the necessities of Mrs. Wise and family, I have been looking out for an opportunity for the last hour to break the matter to the glorious creature; but I'll be blamed if I could find one, or words either."

"Oh, niver try—niver try, sir. It would na do just now. It would be hurled back to puir dear Murdoch, by that high-spirited woman, Mrs. Wise."

At the words, "dear Murdoch," the doctor winced. Somehow in this short time he had unintentionally suffered himself to appropriate Minny. He constituted himself (in feeling) her friend and guardian.

"I'll manage it for ye. Poor dear Murdoch made a bad beginning. He offended Myra at the outset, whose feelings are as tender as a fresh wound, and as morbid as an old sore, by too plain showing of admiration. She, puir soul, has na yet learned to forget and forgive. I would na have that honest Night Watch's feelings wounded for sae gude a deed."

"Well, here Minny, take the purse."

The girl blushed crimson, thus to hear her name pronounced with such familiarity by the man she had learned to like and respect so much.

On seeing her embarrassment, he tried to apologize,

but became himself confused — then resumed, in a more formal way: “Here, Miss Dun, take the purse and do with its contents as your own judgment may prompt, then all will be well, at least right.” He takes Minny’s hand, presses it kindly — almost tenderly. “I can’t help it. Good night, dear good little Minny, as everybody calls you.”

On passing by the hovel, the same dark mass moved away.

“Well, I’ll be blamed if that ‘*dear* Night Watch’ (as Minny says) does not confine his watch to the house of ‘his lady love.’ God forgive me for thus desecrating the name of the peerless Myra. I know of no one who is good or grand enough for her but Charles Murray.”

When he reached the theater, he stopped to listen to that thundering applause. “Ha! the devil has broke loose here, too. Such sounds have not awakened the echoes of these old walls for many a day. I will just look in and see what it is.”

On taking his seat in a side box, he meets an old chum. “Good evening, Gordon. What means all this uproar in the house?”

“Oh, nothing only a little novelty.”

“Well?” responded the doctor.

“You know the public have been bored to death with this dull stock company. The same kings and queens, with the same purple and scarlet robes; the same Coras and Rollas; the same Desdemonas and Othellos; in short, the same everything; so that now they hail with such acclamations the advent of anything that is not a part of that same sameness.”

“Well!” quoth the doctor.

“This novelty makes its appearance on this evening in the shape of a pretty little boy — a lovely child — a very miracle of beauty and grace.”

“Ah, yes! I know,” rejoined Brown. “That little

Minny made me forget everything. Go on, Gordon, if you please."

"The little fellow comes out to-night in the 'Dumb Show,' which is most opportune for him, as the manager only procured his services two hours before the curtain rose, as I have just learned. But, for God's sake, look at Murray. See how ghastly he looks. One would scarcely think that he was so soon to become the lord and master of that haughty beauty there (who is now engaged in such soft dalliance with the man Gaines). I should think the conviction of that fact, and that he is so soon to have the control of all those thousands, would bring him to life. Now, by our 'patron saint!' he looks much more like mounting the pale horse, than a triumphal car."

"Humph! But, Gordon, how do you know that Murray is to be married to Miss Lindsay?"

"I may not tell you, doctor, how I heard it; but I know it to be true, sir. He has just perceived his 'affianced' surrounded by that swarm of insects. I should not like to see my wife (that is to be) leaning so affectionately on the arm of that fopling."

"Hush! Gordon. Gaines is a right good fellow, and would, I think, make a better, more useful, maybe a more suitable husband for the beauty than the cold, haughty Murray."

"Look! he seats himself behind her, bowing so slightly to her warm salutations. Now, see how she looks at him, her face expressing as in so many words, 'Ah! proud man, I hold you fast in golden chains, with 'half a million' links.'

"Why, Gordon, I'll be blamed if I don't believe you are jealous and envious too."

"Ha! ha! ha!" loudly laughed the young man. "No, Brown, I have only spoken the truth, which is another novelty in the house."

"No such thing; the woman loves the man devotedly,

passionately, and he is grateful for it. He cares not for her gold. She is naturally disposed to be a coquette, and you have all, every one of you, helped to foster this disposition. Now, when you see your own handy-work matured, you stand back and find fault, and blame her for being what you yourselves have made her."

The curtain rises; a train of villagers advance with Clarence at their head. He is the presiding divinity, and is presumed to be deaf and dumb, but omniscient withal. He is magnificently attired, glittering with jewels; his beautiful golden locks hang in graceful curls over his neck and shoulders, which are bare. A bright tinge of carnation on his cheeks gives luster to those deep violet eyes, so full of light and darkness. He walks as if he had trod the boards for years—with the majesty of a real king.

When the train are all on the stage, he turns, takes off his cap, faces them, standing still and very erect. They kneel and render homage, and now the reverberating plaudits are stunning.

It was not in character for the mute prince to hear or to speak; but nature prevailed over art. Just then the child wheeled about—his countenance radiant as one just dropped from heaven—smiled and bowed to the audience. The overwhelming tide of applause continued to roll on. Then the boy approached quite near to the foot-lights, knelt down, raised his little cap in one hand, while with the other he sends many kisses to the audience. The house is electrified. Then follow a few moments of deep silence, induced by admiration, and maybe something better. They had forgotten that this was a departure from all rule and precedent; that the child had lost sight of the character which he had to sustain. They only saw that boy of such superhuman beauty.

The group of kneeling figures start up, surround their prince, raise him above their heads, and bear him off in triumph, but not before he has tossed up his cap into mid-

air, shouting, "Huzza! huzza! long live my friend, Mr. Gooch." Now it seems that those old walls will come down. Peal after peal resounds long after the curtain has dropped.

Immediately on leaving the stage, Clarence had run up to the property room, for the purpose of undressing. He commenced tugging at his gaudy trappings, but finding that he could not disengage himself from their trammels, he sat down and began to weep.

"How now, my prince of beauty, and of little devils? What! crying, after such a hit? I tell you, my fine little man, your fortune is made."

He looks up at the kind-hearted "tire woman."

"Oh! my dear ma'am, I can't help it. Just help me to put off these things, and to put on my clothes."

"Not yet, my darling; you will have to go down again. There will be showers of presents for you. The boxes and pit will rain gold on your own golden head directly."

"Oh! no, ma'am, I can't wait; I have performed my part and fulfilled my promise, now I must run home. I would not make my mother so unhappy for this house full of gold."

Then the woman proceeded to disrobe him. When she had finished, and he had put on his clothes, he threw his little arms around her neck and kissed her. "Thank you, ma'am, and good night."

He was running down stairs, when Mr. Gooch approached.

"My son, they will not rest until they see you before the foot-lights. The house is clamoring for 'the child,' 'the beautiful boy,' 'master whoever-he-is.' Oh! Jenny, why did you disrobe him? But never mind, he is looking very beautiful. Now, just touch these curls over, which look so much like golden threads, with sunbeams playing through them. So! come along, before they burst their throats."

The child was dressed in a little suit of green cloth, with shirt-collar edged with fine lace—thanks again to the thrift of dear little Minny. The manager leads him out in front of the curtain, and announces Master Clarens. And now again burst forth those shouts, mingled with the clink of silver and gold, as it falls like hail from gallery, pit, and boxes.

“Mercy! What a harvest! What a shower of metal!”

Clarry, contrary to all stage etiquette, pulled away from the manager, who essayed still to hold him fast by the hand, and giving one glad, grateful look to the audience, sets about gathering up the money.

Presently the child comes up to Mr. Gooch (who is looking on in placid wonderment), and dropping gracefully on one knee, in real play-house style, with mock reverence offers the little cap, which is half full. Just then the full orchestra strikes up, and the house is in an uproar. Some throw their hats, gloves, and caps, and with more heedless temerity than discretion or good taste, jump on the stage.

When Clarence comes out in citizen's dress, and raises his sweet, plaintive, and weary-looking eyes to the boxes, Murray starts to his feet; he recognizes the little boy he had once met in the church. Then quickly flashes athwart his mind the recollection of certain events, times and places. The resemblance to *her* and many things which were forgotten are now reflected on the mirror of his bewildered mind. He leaves the box abruptly, forgetting that he had escorted Miss Lindsay there; he goes to the private door—has bribed the keeper to admit him, finds his way to the green-room, and inquires in a hurried, agitated voice for Master Clarens.

The prompter points to a figure just moving off, with a child in his arms very much muffled up: “There,” said the man, “that good-hearted Night Watch brought him here in his arms and so he carries him away.”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LOVER.—SOUL-PHASES.

“THERE is a kind of mournful eloquence
In thy dumb grief, which shames all clam’rous sorrow.”

“Why let the stricken deer go weep, the heart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep; so runs the world away.”

IT was near midnight; the old lady sat rocking herself as usual. Myra had been assisted to rise, and was rolled up in a blanket, reclining in a comfortable sick-chair. By-the-by, both of these articles of luxury had been loaned to the poor invalid by their little friend. She was looking very patient and quiescent, while her grandmother was nervous and perturbed. They seemed to have changed natures; the elder lady had let go her trust in this case, while the younger one appeared to have taken hold of hope with a pertinacity equalled only by her former despair.

“Grandma, I heard the name of one to-night whom I thought far away, beyond the seas.”

“Yes, I know;” says the old lady, rocking herself even more violently than ever. “That little Minny has few faults, but like all other lassies when there is a lad in the way, her tongue grows lax and frivolous. I think, Myra, she was mightily taken up with Doctor Brown, considering they were strangers.”

“I think not too much so, grandma. I remarked a look of surprised admiration on the countenance of the Doctor.”

“Well! maybe so. I do wish he would fall dead in

love with her, and they would marry ere long"—her little fit of ill-humor now giving way to that universal philanthropy which generally pervaded her nature.

"But dear mother, this is wholly irrelevant to the subject. Do you know whether Charles Murray is here, or even in the United States?"

The old lady turns about restlessly; then says: "I do not know anything about your cousin Charles. Never saw him as I know of, and I'm glad of it. Everything that is sad and painful, is associated in my mind with his name. Your own pitiful destiny, your mother's melancholy death, and the name of Charles Murray are stereotyped on my heart—yet I never saw the man. I understand that he was a noble, generous fellow, and handsome withal."

"Oh yes, yes! He was godlike in all things; one to whom the heart would naturally turn in time of love and prosperity, and the soul cling in the hour of darkness and adversity; to love and trust at all times, and worship evermore." Myra, while speaking, had clasped her hands together, and raised her eyes to heaven—the finest personification of adoration.

"Nonsense! Tut, tut. Now child you are going off again. If you are about to mount your stilts, I want to retire. Why do you think of the past? Look ahead, look ahead, and think of the present, too."

"O God! I have no present—no future. Compared with that *one* season of past happiness, that Elysium of joy and rapture, my present life is a blank! It is worse! a thousand times worse! Oh, would I were dead! Oh that I were a nonentity!"

"Certainly," said the old lady; "of course you do; having now no duties on earth to perform; no interest here below; no God to please, no crown to win in heaven; no aged parent, whose passage to the grave should be smoothed; no child to —"

She starts as if affrighted. "Oh, forgive me, dear mother, I have, I fear, committed a great sin."

"Ask *God!* to forgive you then, poor child. Ask Christ to plead for you. I do indeed consider it a great sin, thus to overlook, or shut your eyes to all these comforts," said the grandmother, looking round.

"You will pray for me, will you not, dear mother?"

A rap. "Ah! here you are, my bonny bairn, as Minny calls you. Come in, friend Murdoch; come to the fire, and warm yourself," said the old lady.

"Thank you, but it is late, and maybe I had better not." He had placed the child on the floor, who ran joyfully and bounded into his mother's lap.

"Not so, never too late to render thanks to a good man for such services. Come and warm yourself, good Murdoch, for this night is as cold and pitiless as the frozen, flinty hearts of the rich and grand." She takes his hand and draws him to the fire.

The child is whispering to his mother. They hear him say, "He has been so kind to me, mamma."

She answers, "Certainly, my love," kissing him tenderly. "My own heart prompts such a course."

So when Murdoch stands there, she rises, wrapping the blanket still more closely around her, offers him her little, soft, white hand, and begins to utter some words of thanks. The little hand is grasped by that bear-skin paw, and pressed with such energy as would, if continued, have crushed those slender bones.

Finding she drew away quickly, he raised his eyes with an humble, deprecatory look, and then dropped his head on his breast. He had met only an expression of amazement in her gentle eyes; but the poor, stricken man could not endure the fulgence of those glorious orbs, so full of all the best and brightest emotions which belong to earth, and heaven too, for aught Murdoch knew or could think, or reason either. The good Night Watch was past

anything of the sort now. The touch of that little hand had set in motion the electric fluid, which carried a telegraphic dispatch to every little, hidden, secret place in his heart. The great soul of that rude man raised itself to God, through the reverential devotion it felt for His image there before him.

I know not how he would have managed to quell, at least conceal, those feelings from the lady; for all pure and honest as his purposes were, the fastidious and untamed Myra would have thought it an abomination for a man in his sphere to have poured out his heart's blood even in her service, if prompted by *love*. All desolate and prostrate by sorrows, sickness, poverty, almost starvation—she never dreamed of descending from her high seat. Since the real world was shut out from her, since she was separated from all that was alluring and was no longer permitted to mingle with kindred natures, she had created a world for herself, and in her fervid imagination had peopled it with creatures only a little less than the angels. Is it any wonder, then, that she usually appeared abstracted, cold, and sometimes haughty? These generally sufficed to soothe her. But when those same hard realities, those stern necessities which are without law, came, and she is forced to contemplate life as it is, she then, as well as others, must need succumb. Now comes conscience, bringing self-reproach, and memory's vast store-house is unlocked. She shudders, shrinks, and dashes this mirror of the mind to the earth. It is shivered, but she finds her frenzy has only furnished fragments by which her woes are multiplied.

Dear reader, our sympathy for the lovely but ill-fated Myra has caused us to ramble. We return to the Night Watch. We were thinking that he could not extricate himself from that bewildering dilemma, but just then his, and everybody's good genius, little Minny Dun, came skipping into the room.

"I bid ye good even, friends. How do ye do, Murdoch?" giving her hand.

"Oh! my sweet birdie! come to yer ain lassie."

Clarence had climbed to the knee of Murdoch and, intuitively seeing there was something wrong, he clasps his arms around his neck, as was his custom toward all whom he loved, and kissed him several times, through that mass of heavy, black beard.

"Come here, darling, and tell Minny all about it." She offers to take him. (This is done to please Myra, who is really shocked at the child's familiarity.)

She is arrested by a call: "Minny, Minny Dun, come here."

Minny flies to the old lady, who is again bending under the weight of the same tea-board.

"Here, child, help me. You see, children (she draws the little table to the fire), in the halls of my father it was taught us with our religion, if a stranger came to our door, he must not go away as such. If any came cold and hungry, they must be fed and warmed. I can not do as I was trained, but the disposition is left, while the power is almost gone. Yet somebody has said, 'where there's a will there's a way,' and I believe that doctrine."

While talking, she had busied herself in pouring out cups of fine, clear, hot coffee. Then there were crackers, and cakes, and sardines, with a leetle bottle of wine.

"Now come, friends, and surround the board of Mrs. Glen——"

An impatient and frightened look from Myra arrested the half-spoken word, and she added in a subdued tone, "Of poor old Mrs. Wise. My daughter, will you come? Murdoch will wheel your chair to the table?"

Myra frowned, and Minny, with her usual tact, added: "Nae, nae! not sa; that auld lady maun bide in the corner and munch her cracker soaked in a little wine, while we young folks enjoy a' these good things."

So they sit there chatting, and laughing, and eating, and drinking. Murdoch seems to have recovered himself. He is not hilarious, like Minny and Clarry, but he seems quiet, and for the time, happy. He has told them all with which the reader has already been made acquainted, exclaiming, "Oh! it was a high trump, a mighty hit, a marvelous success!"

The child has fallen asleep in Minny's arms, and now she says, as the old lady relieves her of her charge, "Murdoch, do you hear that cry? 'Past o-n-e o'c-l-o-c-k.' I must e'en bundle and go."

She rose, and kissing both ladies, turns to the man, who is trying to pull something from his pocket. "What is that, Murdoch?"

"'Tis the child's wages; the manager gave it to me to fetch for him. He said it was not the custom of the house, but the boy earned it honestly, and he wanted him to have it. His own little cap was pretty nigh half full, but he kept giving away piece by piece until it has dwindled down to this."

"Oh, you dinna tell me, gude man, that all this siller belongs to my little birdie?"

She takes the silk handkerchief, and going to the table, pours out the contents of gold and silver coin, and counts it. "Forty and five—and"—

"That will do, Minny. Do, if you please, sir, keep the balance. Do oblige me. It would make the dear child so happy."

"I can't, ma'am; indeed I can not do it," says Murdoch.

"Then you wound our feelings by refusing," said Myra, with emotion.

Minny gives him a sign to accept; but while she is again kissing adieu to Myra, Murdoch very quietly places the coin on the mantle-piece. On leaving, as they opened the door, somebody swept by them so briskly, that they could not discern who it was.

"Murdoch, I do believe that was old Faggot," said Minny.

"Yes, the same thought struck me. I'll bet my life that he has been peering through the window. Let us go back, and ascertain whether he could see through that blue rag, there. If he has been watching you, while you counted the gold, I must at once sound my rattle, and set a guard over the house."

"I dinna think it will be well to do sae, Murdoch. It would scare Mrs. Wise to death. Now, you gude man, as ye are, jest take your stand by the post, as ye do every night." And Minny sent forth a little merry but harmless giggle.

"Pshaw! nonsense, Minny, what makes you such a little fool?"

"Nature, I reckon, Murdoch. You ken I didna' mak' my ain sel."

When they found themselves before the window, all seemed secure, and there was no gleam of light issuing from it.

"They have mended the slit in that old window-cover. They used to sit there, with it gaping wide open; so that all who passed might see," said Murdoch.

"That was when the puir bodies were so bowed with greeting and glamouring."

"They are happy now, are they, Minny? Oh, girl," says he, griping her arm, "I would lay down this rough carcass, and be trampled to death—have the soul crushed out of me, if that woman could walk over it to comfort and happiness."

"O Murdoch, what mak's *you* sic a fool?"

"The Devil, I reckon, Minny, and that woman's pretty face."

"Listen to me, dear Murdoch, you must get o'er all this! Ye are the humble 'Night Watch' o' these streets. Ye are hardly seen or known in the light o' day. There

is a great gulf between you. You are the black, murky night. She is the winsome, glorious day. Think not o' her, Murdoch, an ye love your ain soul! You wad peril your body, I know; but mind the soul, man! that which ye have in trust only, frae God: you may not offer up the soul o' your body on any altar save one! God will require it at your hands! Think nae mair about that haughty woman, Murdoch."

"Why, Minny, she is poor and defenseless, uncared-for, and unknown; and if I am just what you say I am, why should she scorn this heart, which, God knows, has never yet nursed a mean or a dishonest thought or purpose? You are hard upon me, Minny. I am not so lowly as you think me, perhaps. I am as high up in the world now as she is; I am, may be, as acceptable in the sight of heaven as she — and"

"Oh, niver mind all that. May be ye are mair sae. You may be altogether better. Still think not o' her. I advise ye for your ain gude."

"But Minny, will nothing move her? Will not this devotion, which would shame the love of all others before? If I lay down my life, will she not then think kindly of me?"

"Nae, nae! not in the way ye wish, I ween."

"I can not live thus," said the man, dropping his arms down heavily by his side. "Minny, dear Minny! if you should hear, some day, that I have thrown myself from that old bridge into the flood beneath, will you tell her that I died a martyr to that love which I dared not confess."

"Oh, niver fash! Gude Murdoch, shake it all off; rouse up, man. There's a good time coming to us a'

"Grandam says so, and she knows. She believes in dreams, and sae do I. Last night we both dreamed the same dream, and I canna' forget it."

"What was the dream, Minny?"

"I have nae time to tell it to ye now. But 'tis the sign o' good times; mair by token there's a good time coming."

"But, Minny, the lady was not so haughty to me to-night?"

"Oh, but it is a' nothing; trust not to symptoms." She turned quickly, and looking him keenly in the face, says: "Murdoch, I'll jest ask ye one question, an ye'll let me?" —

"Say on," groaned the man.

"Wad ye tak' an empty casket and wear it in your ain bosom, when its gem had gone to enrich that of another? Wad ye? Tell me that, man? Ye had nae thought o' that, had ye, friend?" He walks on moodily, without speaking. Then he recovers himself and looks about.

"Minny, we are at least a mile from your house."

"Oh, I kenned it a' the time, Murdoch; but I thought it wad do ye good; help to cool the fever in your brain, and may be put out that flame in your heart. I would save ye, Murdoch, for I know ye are an honest and true-hearted man. But Lucifer has set you on fire, puir man!"

Ere they arrive at the door of the little toy-shop, Minny has reasoned him into a more genial mood. There is, therefore, no trace of his former fierceness in his tone, as he bids her "Good night."

The next day Mr. Gooch of the — Theater, called at the hovel, and being a generous as well as just man, offers a liberal salary for the services of the little Clarry. The grandmother grows fiercely angry, and seems disposed to show the good man the door. But Myra listens with a pleased and gratified attention to the hyperbolical praises of her darling. She does not consent to his terms until he pledges himself by a written contract, to give the child two hours instruction in the useful branches every day. "I would not part with my child. I would not give him up to you thus, soul and body, knowing how

plastic is childhood's tender mind, if I did not feel a sort of premonition, that you would deal justly by us, and that you are not only upright, but sympathetic and benevolent. I have not the facilities to educate my son. Scarce can I find covering for his tender limbs, or suitable food for his delicate frame. Why and how I have been reduced to this necessity—in what way and by whose instrumentality I have been dragged down to this miserable condition (looking around her), it boots me not to tell. Let it suffice to know, that none here or elsewhere have been more tenderly nurtured, or more affectionately cared for. None in the whole land can boast of higher and purer lineage. But I am now what you see me, and must bide God's own time to restore the right, and punish the wrong. I entrust you with the only jewel I have left. Guard it as you prize your own life; as you desire the well-being of your loved ones; as you value your immortal soul; above all, as you love Christ, and hope for mercy through him in that last day—that solemn scene in the closing act of the drama of life—I conjure you to shield my heart's treasure from harm and from vice."

The manager is deeply moved, goes to the window, and wipes his eyes. He sees a Bible lying open, brings it to Myra, and proceeds to swear.

"Stop!" says the lady, placing her own little white hand on his; "I will trust to your simple word. Honesty is written on your face, and your name stands high on Fame's peerage roll. Take him. I will trust."

He now proceeded to arrange the terms. The little boy was to go early every morning, the Sabbath excepted; the whole of that day would belong to his mother. He should receive all requisite instruction, have proper hours for recreation and exercise: the rest of the time would be taken up in getting ready and in rehearsing his little role.

"That will do," said the young mother. "I trust to your kind heart that he shall not be overtaxed."

"Come here, Clarence," said she, and the child ran in from the kitchen, where he had been assisting his grandmother. His sweet baby face was blurred and smutted, with soot and coal dust; and his hands were red and stiff with cold. He wore a long-sleeved, coarse, linen apron. On perceiving Mr. Gooch, he stops, looking abashed; but quickly recovering himself, he goes up to him.

"Ho! ho! ho! My little prince, come doff that linen vesture, and assume the royal purple."

Myra takes off the apron, washes his face, smooths his hair, curling each bright lock over her own tiny fingers. When she has finished, he agains turns to Mr. Gooch, who exclaims, with a genuine burst of admiration,

"Hail, once more, Duke of York! I think he is a wonderful genius."

"Not so," said Myra. "He used to go sometimes to the theater, where everything was explained to him; and we have read many of the popular plays together; also a few of Shakspeare's; and having a fine memory, he would frequently be able afterward to repeat whole pages. Then, for amusement, and in sheer idleness, I would instruct him in some simple rules of elocution. Many times before he has been hailed 'Duke of York.' Sometimes he has ventured on 'Richard,' and 'Albert,' and others."

"All this will now bring its reward. It will most assuredly be repaid to you a thousand fold in the success of your son; in the pride you are bound to feel in his brilliant career. It will also return to you in a golden harvest. Will you allow me, madam, to pay a month's salary in advance."

"Oh no! I pray you do not place me under this obligation; permit me to decline. See what he brought home last night," showing the pieces of gold and silver coin.

"We shall need no more until he has won his way to public favor, and is deemed worthy of his hire."

"Should you need any aid or service, of whatever nature, will you honor me with your commands?"

She thanked him with a sweet smile, and having embraced the child tenderly, over and over again, hands him to Mr. Gooch.

"Madam," says he, presenting his hand, "may I hope that you will permit me sometimes to call on you along with my protégé?"

Myra blushed, but replied quickly, "I fear, sir, I must forego this pleasure, for the present. When I am differently situated it will afford me the greatest gratification. I will advise you of that time through my son, and will then hope to see you."

"Sir, will you not let me take my tea every evening with my mother?"

"Oh yes," says Myra, eagerly; "I had forgotten to stipulate for that."

"Certainly," replied Mr. Gooch; "anything and everything, in reason, shall be permitted. Good morning, madam."

Another kiss on that sweet, dewy mouth, and an ardent embrace from the child, and she is alone.

"And is he gone?" she exclaims with "Medora."
"And is he gone! Is Conrad gone!"

"Yes, he's gone," quoth the old lady; "he *is* gone; and where is he gone? And who has sent him on his way to perdition. Oh, Myra! you will regret it; I fear you will rue the day that you ever saw that man, that Mr. Goose, or whatever else his hateful name is. What is his name?"

"Gooch, madam."

"Well, I don't care; I hate him, any how. He has taken the only sunbeam from this house. Sad, and dreary, and deep is the gloom of this place to me now!"

"Grandma, hush! for God's sake hush! Would you

upset what little courage I may have drawn from the hope of having done my duty? Would you have that gifted child to be forever a ‘Hewer of wood, and drawer of water?’”

“I would have him, when he quits this world prepared to mingle with pure spirits in heaven; I would have him ready to meet his God! Oh! most unnatural mother! Oh, proud, ambitious woman! will nothing humble you?”

Myra sat quite unmoved. She neither spoke, nor wept. She seemed to be sustained and buoyed up above all that could vex or annoy. Hope was now at the helm, therefore the little bark will weather the storm, and that poor, stricken young mother will find her vessel, with herself and sweet fledgling in a safe mooring at last.

“Oh!” sobbed the old lady, still rocking herself fiercely, “I miss my child; I miss his bright face, his mocking-bird voice, and I miss his little hands more than all.”

Myra smiled quietly, but said nothing.

This domestic scene was interrupted by the entrance of an old man, who softly lifts the latch and comes, unannounced, toward the fire, creeping and tottering along. His beard and hair are as white as milk, hanging far down on his breast and shoulders. He is poorly clad and seems to be cold and weary.

Myra hands him a chair, looking pityingly at him; then invites him very kindly to draw near to the fire; offers to take his cap, which he declines, speaking in a low and quavering voice. He seems wholly absorbed in the comforts of the little grate, spreading out his thin, bony hands over the blaze.

The old lady has left the room, and Myra again begins to ply her needle, having fixed her eyes on her work; the old man peers keenly from under his cap around the room; no corner or crevice escapes him. He fixes his eyes on the lady; as she raises her's from time to time his

drop beneath their soft, mild expression, and instantly resume the same stolid, marble-like look.

Finally, he asks her, with the real mendicant whine, for something to eat, saying he had journeyed far, and had not yet broken his fast.

She leaves the room, and as she passed to the kitchen, murmured, "Poor old man, I will divide even to the half that I have."

She was gone but a moment, yet long enough for the money which Murdoch had placed on the mantle-piece to pass from the shelf to his pocket.

Myra returns, saying she had nothing in the house fit to offer him, but gives him a piece of money, telling him he must buy a dinner at some restaurant.

He thanked her very humbly, and rose to depart; but suddenly seeming to remember something he again seated himself; he then inquired if she wanted to hire a servant?

Myra replied she would like to get a little negro girl.

"All right then, madam, I have just the one to suit you; but I ask two dollars a week."

Myra nodded assent.

Promising to send her that evening, he thanked her for her charity, and offered his withered hand, and as he seemed to bow his head over her's she saw that his eyes gleamed with a sinister expression, as they fell on the opal ring.

Late in the afternoon, when the sun was about to bid adieu to this nether world, there came to the hovel a tall, graceful girl, very much wrapped up, and closely veiled. She seemed reserved and constrained, but Myra was interested, and showed her all the civilities which the nature of the case permitted. At last she spoke in a low, sweet, tremulous voice:

"I have called, madam, to see you about the little servant whom my father engaged to furnish. I entreat you

to show her as much lenity as will be consistent with prudence only. She is a smart child, and will seem docile and obedient, but children should not be *trusted* too far. Mind my words, lady, and trust not too much."

"I hope she is good and faithful; above all, truthful," said Myra.

"I will bring her, madam, and let you try her," said the girl, seeming to evade the query.

She left, but in a very short time returned, bringing with her a little negro girl, very black, and with remarkably straight hair for an African. Myra throughout had treated the veiled lady with so much consideration and kindness, that when she took her hand to say adieu, she carried it to her lips, and a tear fell on it, dimming that same opal ring.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LADY AND THE TOADY.

"Nor do they trust their tongues alone,
But speak a language of their own ;
Can read a nod, a shrug, a look,
Far better than a printed book ;
Convey a libel in a frown,
And wink a reputation down."

SWEET Mary Green and her mother sat in that young lady's dressing-room. The former had been ill for several weeks, consequently had not set out on that tour which was in projection at the opening of our story. Myra had never been called on to aid them in fitting out her wardrobe ; but there had been forwarded to her from time to time, very substantial proofs of their generosity. Neither Mary nor her mother had called since, so they never knew that the greater portion of their bounty had not reached them. Negroes do not like to see anything going out from the full stores of their owners to the empty shelves of "poor white folks," as they term the less fortunate members of God's family. Therefore, much that was intended to comfort the interesting members of that little household never traveled beyond the kitchen, or the nearest negro quarters.

The mother and daughter were just speaking of that "poor lady in disguise," as Emma always called Myra, when she (Emma) entered the room.

After the usual salutations were over, and the sincere kiss of friendship had been given, Emma Calderwood

commenced in her off-hand way: "Ah! Mary, I have the strangest thing to tell you."

"Have you, then?" replied Mary, "I'm glad of it; I have not heard a marvelous thing since I last saw your mother and Miss Nancy."

"I do wish you had been at the theater for the last few nights. Our own beautiful little protégé made his debut, and looked ten times more lovely than ever. I do think there must have been a peck of sovereigns thrown on to the stage."

A servant enters and announces Mrs. Calderwood and Miss Jones.

"Oh Lord! Now I am dumb, and would like to be deaf for the next half hour," said Emma, looking annoyed.

"Ask them to walk up, Ruth," said Mrs. Green.

Presently they were heard ascending the steps—Mrs. Calderwood bending under the weight of finery, and poor old Miss Nancy under her budget of news. They seem to be in high glee.

"Ah! said Emma, somebody is down now. Hear! they are holding a jubilee over some pretty woman's fall, some poor man's failure or defalcation. Some lady's misfortunes have furnished the basis for this rejoicing."

"Oh! you here, Emma? I thought you had gone to congratulate your friends on their elevation, that is to be," said Mrs. Calderwood.

"No, mamma, I came here to sit with Mary."

After being seated, seeing that neither Emma, Mary, nor Mrs. Green asked an explanation, Miss Nancy Jones opens the conversation by saying,

"Well, Mis Green, have you heard the news to-day?"

"I have read it, Miss Jones."

"Oh! but I guess you haven't read it all."

"I have read all that was meant for the public eye. Beyond this I have no right or desire to pry."

"Oh! you haven't? Well, Mis Callerwood, but don't

you think it's very strange that she should have sold her child ? her own flesh and blood ? ”

“ Whom do you mean, Miss Nancy ? ” asked Emma.

“ Why, your and Miss Green's *prodigy* of perfection, that insolent woman down on Market street. Yes, she has actually sold her little boy to Gooch, the manager of the — theater,” rejoined Mrs. Calderwood, with a look of great satisfaction.

“ Yes, indeed,” struck in Miss Nancy, “ Gooch was down there the other morning, closely shut up the whole day with the milliner. Toward night he was seen going home leading the poor lad along, just like a calf or a sheep, by the shambles.”

“ He gives her a fine price, certainly,” added Mrs. C., “ more than any one of my negro boys would bring.”

“ How much, Madam ? ” asked Mrs. Green, looking very coldly.

“ Oh, I don't know. I can't descend to particulars ; but I was told it was a fine price, and a very advantageous sale.”

“ O mamma ! do stop ; you make me sick.”

“ I don't wonder, my dear ; and you must be pained too, to find yourself so deceived and put upon by such vile dissembling stragglers, and I don't know what else besides.”

Emma was about to attempt a justification of her favorites, when Miss Nancy again cut in.

“ They do say, Mis Callerwood, that Gooch and that milliner are agoing to get married right away ; and then she's to take all the heavy tragedy-queen parts ; and the old woman's to play all the hags, and witches of Dendor, and Bacbeth ; and the boy's to do all the young villains and dare-devils.”

“ Ah ! now you are at fault, Jones. I'm better posted up this time, for a wonder, than even the sapient Miss Nancy.”

"What? what is it, then, Mis Calderwood? Now do tell?"

"Why, mam, she is—without a shadow of a doubt, without the slightest shade of an uncertainty—engaged to Murdoch, 'The Night Watch.' He almost lives there, either inside or outside of the house. He stays, I'm told, till one or two o'clock every night with the woman inside, and till day against the lamp-post on the outside. Now you know, of course, Mrs. Green, that the old woman and child must be fast asleep long before that. You must know this, mad-am."

"No, Mrs. Calderwood, I do not know. I am not so well posted up as yourself."

"Well, any how," again cut in poor old Miss Nancy, "When he is forced away from her, by his street duties, he jest takes his stand before her window, and peeps in at her through the curtain (which has a slit torn in it on purpose) the live long night."

"Oh! This is monstrous! It is unprecedented vindictiveness."

"'Tis so, Mis Green. 'Tis monsrous bad, indeed; and to think that I belittled myself so much as to ask her to quilt me a *skuirt*."

"And that foolish child there, wanted to give her all those fine fabrics of hers to have ruined, and spotted over with salt water from those soft, deceptious-looking eyes. I wonder, Mrs. Green, if it will get out to our injury, that we entered that den of vice and poverty?" asked Mrs. Calderwood.

"And do you think, Mis Green, 'twill blemish my reputation, if it gets to be known that I went in there to ask her to"—

"Which she rejected with such scorn," said Emma, laughing heartily. "Oh! she would *not* quilt that *skirt*. How impertinent?"

"Shut up, Miss Purtness, I'm not a talking to you.

Do you, mam," again turning to Mrs. Green with an innocent look of inquiry.

"Oh no! I think you have nothing to fear. I have no idea that either of you ladies can be *worsted* by this unfortunate stranger."

"Well, I reckon not. We are too well established," said Mrs. Calderwood.

"Doubtless in some things, to be hurt," rejoined Mrs. Green.

"Mis Callerwood, they do say that Murray and Gertrude Lindsay are agoing to be married next week."

"You don't say so, Jones? Oh, it can't be true!"

"Yes, it can though. I tell you they do say so."

"Why, Jones, what did Ann tell Moggy Ann? Didn't she say it was all off?"

"Oh, but Ann didn't prick her ears well, that time. It was all made up that same night, and the day was fixed then. Gertrude goes every day now, to see the 'young old lady,' and they are as thick as peas in a pod. The old woman loves the girl, but Murray loves the money."

"How did you learn all these private matters?" asked Mrs. Green, coldly.

"Never mind, I've got a little bird that tells me everything."

"Is it a white, black, or yellow bird?" asked Emma, with a merry look.

Miss Nancy again scowled, and looking at the girl, said between her clenched teeth—"Insolent, hateful thing."

"But is this so," inquired Mrs. Calderwood. "Have you heard of it, Mrs. Green?"

"Yes, madam, I know they are to be married, but not so soon."

They then left; and in the course of the morning made many calls, repeating everywhere those slanders.

One would think, that this was a sorry and depraved condition of society, when such persons as these are

received on familiar footing into the first families in the city. Yet it is not more strange than true. You must know, dear reader, that Mrs. Calderwood is wealthy, gives big dinners, and grand parties; is besides, related to the present Governor. Miss Nancy Jones is her "prime minister." Gossip, eaves-dropper and toady, and general spy, as she is well known to be, she is still received and even welcomed almost everywhere. Our neighbors are very fond of knowing each other's business; above all, their *family* secrets. Consequently those two ladies are courted by all.

Their last visit is made to the mansion of Col. Murray. They are ushered into the drawing-room without delay. This is one of the old lady's regular reception-days. She has only three a week. Miss Lindsay, Mrs. Murray, and the Colonel are at *home*. Gertrude is seated at the piano, and is looking magnificent. Truly, happiness is a great beautifier of the human face! The mother is arrayed in all her regality — purple, velvet, Mechlin lace, and jewels. The son is dressed with severe simplicity, and is silent and moody.

On the entrance of the ladies, Miss Lindsay had risen from the instrument. She seats herself apart from the company, and Murray, to shield himself from the obtrusiveness of the visitors, takes a chair by her side, and commences a conversation in a low tone.

Gertrude was greatly delighted. But now he is fast sinking into abstraction. At last he seems to have forgotten her — her, his betrothed. Her presence brings no beam of sunshine to his frozen heart.

Poor Murray! he had some time since recovered from his brief intoxication; had waked up, and could dream no more. But with the same sort of highly-wrought resolution which incites a man to meet danger or death, for honor or conscience-sake, he was determined to go through with the marriage; yet there was a feeling of

entere self-immolation. He might be wretched, or he might die, but he would not with premeditation sully his honor or forfeit his word.

In the meantime, these two familiar acquaintances had regularly recounted to Mrs. Murray all that had been repeated at Mrs. Green's, which had been detailed with many additions at some four or five other places. Now it had swelled into a mighty and marvelous tale, strange and ugly, as Miss Nancy said. Murray, during his seeming revery, had been listening fixedly. Not a word had escaped him. But when they spoke of Murdoch as a lover, nay, as the affianced of the incomparable Myra, he started to his feet so suddenly as to frighten Gertrude. On passing, he trod on her foot, which made her scream out.

"Pardon me," said he, and hurried out of the room. A sign passed from one lady to the other.

When these two harpies had left, Miss Lindsay drew near to Mrs. Murray, taking a low seat at her feet, and looking distractedly around her, says,

"Mother, O mother, pity me!"

She oftentimes accosted her by that endearing name. In fact, the unwavering friendship which these two congenial natures felt for each other, that intimacy which had withstood so many rude shocks, was the one redeeming trait in their lives—"The one virtue linked with a thousand faults." Gertrude had grown up from infancy under the eye of Mrs. Murray, and was in some sort her foster child.

"Now you see, mother, how it is? I told you so. When I read that anonymous letter, I felt my doom was fixed. You tried to reassure me, and you did caress away my doubts for the time, but they have returned with ten-fold intensity. I feel as I imagine a convict does who is subject to the fearful alternations of hope and despair. I will not be trifled with much longer. My father does not know how I have been treated. He does not surmise the base part I have played in this court-

ship. He looks upon Conrad Murray as one full of eccentricities, but as the most chivalric of men, the most impassioned of lovers. But, mother, this thing must end. I will break this chain which has been no chain till now, or so wreathed with roses that I felt it not. Now the thorns begin to prick me, and the links chafe. I shall have this chain either riveted or broken soon. If broken, mother, your foster daughter will not hang herself with a blue or pink silk scarf, nor jump out of a third story window; neither will she, like Juliet, forestall him in the friendly cup, nor even elope with Mr. Gaines; but she will make Charles Conrad Murray rue the hour that he ever saw the light of day, or Gertrude Lindsay."

"Oh! for God's sake! Gertrude stop; you make me shudder. You frighten even me, who never did quail but once in my life, and that was under his eye. That man's eye is as keen as a two-edged sword. But enough. I know, my dear, although he is my son, that there is something wrong about the boy; something strange and fantastical, and then again fearful. But just wait, my child; such a looking woman as you are, Gertrude, beautiful and so voluptuous, must rivet the chain, though it be forged by circumstances and expediency. *I* know, Gerty, I am a judge of these things; and besides, I know too much about his passionate, fierce nature when aroused, to doubt of the result; and don't you doubt either, my dear child, but trust to me. I rarely fail in my diplomacy. I always carry my point, either by foul means or fair."

The beauty seemed reassured. As she passed through the hall, she heard his measured step in the parlor. He did not offer to attend her, although Tivvy had been sent to inform him that such was his mother's wishes.

"Go on, go on, Tivvy; I don't know what you are saying. I will listen to you some other time." The girl stood there staring at him in amazement; he was as pale as death. "Go away, Tivvy, that's a good girl."

"What shall I tell *her*?" said Tivvy.

"Anything you please, so that you leave me alone."

When Tivvy vanished, he locked the door and resumed his march, talking the while.

"Why this wild emotion? What is the woman to me? Nothing, other than she resembles my lost Marianna. I do not know much of this poor lady, but every one who does know her says she is an angel. Why should I thus shudder at the good Murdoch mating with this gentle dove? I am myself to be married soon, and my own marriage will be as ill-assorted as theirs. That child, too, is like my lost bride. Poor Marianna! cut off in the flower of thy youth, amid the glory of such heavenly beauty." He stops and placing his finger on his lip, seems to reflect. "Would to heaven I could break these two untoward marriages; would that I knew the secret which envelops her life. O that I could clear up those dark mysteries. What brings that old Jew peddler here? or why does he thus dog my steps? Thrice have I turned, intending to chastise his impertinence, old as he is; but he seemed to fade from my sight as if the earth had opened and swallowed him up. Ah! how that woman's image haunts me! Ha! now I remember one of the harpies spoke of her engagement to Gooch, and that she was to become a stock actress. I know this to be false, so may be all else which their vituperative tongues uttered. I know Gooch; he is a gentleman, although connected with a theater, and never would jeopardize the reputation of an unprotected woman. I heard him speak of his interview, which did not last more than one hour. I also heard him laud her modesty and good sense.

A rap at the door, and the impatient voice of his mother demands instant admittance. After looking at him very keenly, she said, "My son, Gertrude wishes to attend the theater to-night."

"Well, madam: I have no objection."

"Should you not attend her, sir?—your affianced wife, Charles Conrad Murray!" She always gave the full name when she wished to be impressive.

"I am ready, madam. Do you think she desires my attendance?"

"Of course, she expects it."

"If you wish it, my mother, then I will call for her. But where is Mr. Gaines? I do not remember ever to have seen her there without him. If he does not go with her, he joins her immediately after; and they are frequently so absorbed, that they do not see or hear any of the play."

"Now, Charlie, you are jealous. Well, that is a first rate symptom."

"Not so: would to heaven I could feel or care enough to be made jealous."

The old lady frowned, and her white, even, pretty teeth worked fiercely up and down—and so she swept from the room.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE MISER'S HOME.

“As pale and wan as ashes was his look,
His body lean and meager as a rake,
And skin all withered like a dried rook;
Then, too, as cold and dreary as a snake,
That seemed to tremble evermore and quake.”

WHEN Miss Lindsay left Mrs. Murray, to return home as she stated, after going in that direction for several squares, she struck into an unfrequented street, or alley; this led to a dismal, dirty court, which was that portion of the city occupied by the Jews for dwellings, or rather stopping places (for they do not dwell), and is called the Jews' Quarter. She had now arrived at the place she sought—a gloomy, dilapidated pile of old brick walls, black with age, and green with mold. She entered a dark alley, and passing into a narrow back yard, pushed open a low door, and bending her haughty head, commenced ascending a spiral staircase. Up, up, up, she mounted, higher and higher, until she felt assured she must be near the roof. The next step brought her to a platform, or landing. On reaching this she was compelled to stop for breath. In the intensity of her feelings, amid that tornado of raging passions—love, hatred, and jealousy—she had forgotten everything but the object in view. Having rushed along the street with the velocity of a steam engine, then mounting that flight of steps, which, like Jacob's ladder, seemed to reach to the heavens, she was compelled to lean against the wall for

several moments before she could give the signal, or low double rap.

That platform was so constructed by some cunning device, that when the foot touched the last board, a little bell tinkled over the head of the miser ; consequently he was never taken by surprise. The fact, too, that no one could ascend those winding steps without stopping to rest on the threshhold, was another thing in his favor. The old wretch was indulging (which he sometimes did after an unusual success in villainy) in a bowl of rich stewed oysters, and fine white bread, washed down by the best wine. Leah had prepared this sumptuous repast, and was standing by his side while he ate.

When that little bell tinkled, he exclaimed, "Here shild, take the tings away. Somebody wants to speak mit thy fadder on business. Let every ting be hid away."

As if by magic, the fragments, dirty dishes, and bottle vanished — then, when the rap was given, a little, low, mean chuckle preceded the feeble, quavering "come in ;" and Leah, as once before, became part and parcel of a quantity of old clothes on the wall. When Miss Lindsay entered, she found the Jew seated on the same old hair trunk. He had assumed even a more lean, lank, cold and hungry look than ever.

"Well, Mordecai, I've come again, you see." This was said to the low, cringing reverence, that the miser made to the wealthy aristocrat.

"Yes, mine lady, I sees."

"Then sit down and listen to me. I have such need of your services as will call forth all your energy and shrewdness ; and for which, if you serve me well, and succeed, I will pour more gold into your old trunk there, than any one ever did before, or ever will again."

"Oh ! oh ! mine lady, thou is mishtaken : old Mordecai, the Jew, is so poor that he can't buy new cloth to make his coat, and he is always half starved."

"Never tell me that, Faggot. I know that you and I with our combined strength, could not move that strong-box one inch."

"Oh! oh! thou is mishtaken, mine lady; I will show thee that thou is mishtaken." And then he proceeded to unlock the trunk, which, much to the surprise of Gertrude, contained some articles of clothing, that seemed to be only a little bit cleaner than the rags he wore.

"See! see! lady," says he, as he turns them over for her inspection, "dis is all."

"Well, Jew, I have done you injustice, as many another has, no doubt; and as many more will. But let that pass; I crave your pardon, Mordecai."

"Oh! mine lady!" and he bows himself down in the most servile, abject manner.

"I will say, then, that I will place the largest amount, or the first contribution, if you will, in that trunk."

"Go on, lady, old Faggot is ready."

"Now, Mordecai, you know that pretty milliner down Market street, who is turning the town upside down, and all the men's heads with it. She seems to be in everybody's way. She is in mine, and I want her put out of it. She must be removed—safely stored away, Faggot," and the words came hissingly from her pretty mouth.

"Oh! now, mine lady, how can dat poor woman stand in thy way? the comely and high maiden, mit so much gold monish."

"A truce with your fulsome flattery. If you do not listen and come to terms at once, I will engage old Nathan, the other Jew dog, your next door neighbor. I chose you, Faggot, thinking there are degrees of wickedness even in hell, and of all the devils I wanted the biggest."

"Oh! he! he! he!" chuckled the Jew, and he grinned; showing little white, pointed teeth, such as we see in the mouth of a jackall.

"Go on, lady, I'll do it, dat's all I is got to say. I'll do it. I'll do it."

"Next week I have promised to marry Conrad Murray; but some mysterious circumstances have transpired, which make me think this low-born, obscure, and, I am told, suspicious person will try to interrupt the marriage. Now, Mordecai, I confess, with shame and confusion of face, that I fear this creature more than all the belles and beauties of the city."

"Oh yes! she is comely—bright as de sun, and beautiful as was Fadder Jacob's wife, Rachel—de comely Rachel!"

The lady scowled, and the Jew showed his jackall teeth again.

"Is she so? Then so much greater the necessity to have her removed."

"What does thou propose, my lady?" said Faggot.

"I propose nothing to such a fiendish machinator as yourself. I thought the devil abounded in devices. I did think he was never at a loss for ways and means to work ruin and devastation on the human family. When I find that hovel vacant and Murdoch and his hounds set on the wrong trail, and she is no more forthcoming, I will pay you five hundred dollars."

His little red-hot coals of fire gleamed out again from under his shaggy, gray eye-brows.

"Write it, mine lady," said he, producing the same little ink-horn and the stump of a pen; and taking a small piece of paper, which he again divided, hands her the scrap.

Then that smart, scheming woman, had the imprudence to write her promissory note for that amount, with her true signature affixed.

The door opened, a little negro girl entered, and came toward them.

"Who is this, sir?" shouted the beauty. "How dare

you, base traitor, to allow any one to come upon me here in your vile den?" She sprung to her feet and seized the old man by the collar. "Wretch! dog! I will shake the soul out of your body!" and she jerked him violently from his seat.

"Oh! Fadder Abraham, and Jacob, and de God of dem all, save me! Lady, it is only my own little slave. Fear nothing; she does not understand, nor speak any language but the ancient one of my peoplesh." Then he turned to the child, and they conversed in an earnest tone, the girl making gestures of disgust and disapprobation to what the old man said.

Mordecai turns to the beauty. "You may depend on me. When to-morrow's sun shall rise, he will shine on dat empty hovel—on dat cold grate. Den two, tree days more, and old Faggot will come to de palace of de 'queen of beauty,' to git his monish."

"'Tis well!" said the lady.

Just then there was a slight noise behind those old clothes on the wall. The lady again started to her feet. "What noise was that? Infidel dog! false Israelite! would you entrap and betray your benefactress?"

"Oh! Fadder Abraham! it is nothing, only but rats."

But Gertrude seemed greatly disturbed, and proceeded to examine every part of the wall—peeping and prying curiously about. When she came to those old clothes, she took every piece down and scrutinized the panels. Faggot and the child had watched her with the most nervous anxiety; but when she turned to them again, they were both unconcernedly looking into the fire.

When the lady had left, Faggot and the little negro talked for some time. Then he dismissed her, after which he run his hand under the old clothes on the wall, and a noise was heard like the click of a spring. He now soliloquized, in a low, guttural voice, "I is myself only smart enough to head dat Leah. It takes old Faggot,

mit all his cunning, to overtake dat shild. I is got her fast shut up in her cage now, tank Got! Dat wash one clever invention, dat counter-spring."

He busied himself in taking from their several hiding places certain garments of better quality and condition than those he wore; and while he proceeded to array himself in them, he muttered all the time: "De girl is goot—I like her very much; but she is not true to my peoplesh like Hagar is. So oftentimes she thwarts my plans of vengeance against de proud Nazarene. O Leah! if thou was true to me and mine peoplesh, when my vengeance is satisfied, I would make de like unto de Queen o' Sheba. But Fadder Abraham, de girl is merciful to dem Christian dogs! Yet I is up to her dish time; she is fast enough."

Then he touches another spring in a panel, differing in nothing from the surrounding blank walls. This discovers a large mirror, which reflects the image of the Jew as he looked when he forced poor Myra, as her landlord, to place that sign over her door. He is *himself* now, and presents the appearance of a brisk, shrewd little man—not much beyond fifty or fifty-five years of age. Those ugly, shaggy brows have disappeared; those milk-white locks and flowing beard, have given place to a naked, but wrinkled, dried-looking face, and close-cropped, iron-gray hair. All, everything is changed, but the little gleaming eyes and the jackall teeth. He wraps himself up in his ample shawl, and putting on his cap, views himself again in the mirror, and, with a low chuckle of satisfaction, thus soliloquizes again:

"Oh, oh! the woman is very beautiful; dat Nazarene is comely. I feel someting stirring in dis old heart dat has been dead, dead, dead so long," tapping his side with his fingers. "O Rachel! my beloved wife, I owes to thy memory a hecatomb of dem vile Nazarene. But I

am paying dem off, I am giving dem beds of thorns to sleep on, and tears to water dere couch."

He views himself again from head to foot, and the little, sharp teeth shine out from under the corrugated lips, as he exclaims, "Dat will do; dat will do. De Gentile woman is very comely." Then restoring the mystic panel, he left.

By another intricate stairway he takes his course to a store, comprising articles of every description — new and second-hand clothing, furniture also of the finest mahogany and rosewood, down to the plainest pine boards. On entering the front store he finds a clerk engaged in the sale of a renovated coat, which the young man (a small, thin, but good-looking youth) declared had come that morning from the hands of the tailor.

"Good morning, Mr. Nathan," said young Isaacs, and then they exchanged a few words in their own tongue.

Now Mr. Nathan, the Jew clothing merchant, emerged into that dismal court from his own store. He walked rapidly along through all its devious windings, passing through many a private alley until he reached Market street. There many other Jews are passing and repassing pursuing their several avocations, but all tending to the same end, to overreach and swindle the Christian. There is many a smile of recognition, many a hat touched and head bowed in lowly reverence to the wealthy clothing merchant.

He now arrives at the hovel, having settled in his mind to extort the last penny of the rent before his diabolical purpose of suppressing the beautiful proprietor shall have put it beyond his power to do so. He knocks; a very soft and musical voice invites him to enter. Myra is seated as usual in her low chair, and is writing on her lap. She puts by the old port-folio, and with innate good breeding, rises and offers him a chair. Oh! how beauti-

ful she looks then ! so gentle and winning was her smile ; so pellucid those deep, earnest, blue eyes. He sits there silently gazing at her.

Does the man feel softened ? Does the Jew relent ? While he, with those little fiery eyes devours that matchless form and face, does he relent ? that old Jew. He may, for he is a creature of like passions with ourselves. The Jew may feel, may love. The man, however savage, may be tamed and won from his brutality, but the *miser* never. For one moment the *man*, the *Jew* even, has the ascendancy, and the “ still, small voice ” begins to whisper and is heard. He raises his little blood-shot eyes to her innocent face, her heavenly countenance, and exclaims, mentally,

“ No, I will not harm her. Wretch as I am, I will not, I can not imbrue my hands in her blood. May the God of Jacob render this arm powerless to hurt thee, thou angel woman ! ” In the intensity of this new feeling, for one instant he had lost sight of himself, and stretching out his arm at that point where he makes the solemn adjuration, cries out, “ I can not ; Oh no, I can not ! ”

The sudden start, the evident recoil, and frightened look of his victim disenchanted him. And now avarice asserts his dominion. The Miser whispers, “ Jew, thou art a fool ! Dost thou suffer a pretty face to blind thee to the abject condition of thy hard-pressed people ? — thy despised race ? ” Avarice gibbers in the ear of the man,

“ Dotard ! dost thou not see that she turns loathingly away from thee, shuddering at thy wrinkled face and thy unseemly, aged form ? Bethink thyself, man, Jew, and do thine errand,” and he clutched between his fingers, which he had during his agitation thrust violently into his pocket, the two promissory notes.

Myra turned deadly pale, and rising, would have left the room ; but feeling the necessity upon her to command herself, she sat down, though further away from him.

"Sir," said she, in a timid voice, "is your business with me or with my mother, this afternoon?"

The miser grinned; a grin in which the hyena, teeth and all, was disclosed. He presented a paper, and while she read it, he watched her keenly. Much to his surprise, and maybe regret too, for another passion was now warring with avarice in that old breast, when she had finished it she rose, and inclining her head in the most condescending manner to him, said, "I believe it is Mr. Nathan, our landlord? You will pardon, sir, this recreancy of memory. I had quite forgotten you." She went to her trunk, taking from it a purse, and counted out the amount, and hands it to him.

Avarice has resumed his despotic sway in that poor, old crime-stained heart. His eyes are riveted on the purse, which she still holds in her hand, and he counts and recounts the little sum. After which, with a growl, says, "There is sixpence coming to me." She hands him a shilling; then he with many regrets says, "I has no change, mine lady."

"Never mind, sir, I do not care for it." Myra says this condescendingly; for now that hope has revived and fortune does not frown so loweringly, she was beginning involuntarily to look and act the gracious princess.

The Jew puts on his cap, and coming up to her, presents his skinny hand to take leave, when she, with an irrepressible shudder, steps back and bows, saying, "Good afternoon, sir."

Poor lady! That last act, so natural to thy refined and delicate nature, has steeled that man's heart against thee! Thou couldst not touch those hard, griping fingers—that niggard, miserly hand. But thou didst shake hands with the old pauper, who was filthy and disgusting. Thy gentle hand and heart are open to the calls of charity; but closed to the demands of avarice.

Myra sat for some time after the miser had left, lost in

thought. The man's look, his strange agitation, were all enigmas to her. She did not, for one instant, think that the little dried up, wizen-faced wretch would dare to raise his eyes to her even to admire.

Looking up suddenly, she met the gaze of the little negro fixed upon her. Oh! that look! in it was the concentration of malice. As quick as thought it vanished, and was succeeded by the most gentle, subdued, and obliging expression.

CHAPTER XX.

THE COURTEOUS MANAGER.

"A SEASONED friend not tainted with design,
Who made those words grow useless—thine and mine."

MANY weeks had now elapsed since the little Clarence had gone to take his chance with Mr. Gooch's Stock Company. Still the public clamored for the beautiful child, Master Clarens. Night after night, he had played his part without fault or failure. The contract between the mother and manager had been complied with to the letter; and Myra saw that her boy was improving in strength of mind and body, without losing that sweet simplicity and innocence peculiar to all childhood, but more especially to Clarence. Mr. Gooch had often renewed his solicitations to be permitted to call on the ladies; but Myra, true to herself, always declined, with due courtesy; yet with a firmness which presently convinced him that her scruples were purely prudential, and he learned to respect her the more.

The patrons of that theater were extremely anxious that Clarens should now be brought out in some piece in which all his powers should be put into requisition. Heretofore he had, through the tenderness of Gooch's big heart, been kept pretty much in dumb shows, and pageants, and such other characters as would show off the personal attractions of the child, without taxing his mind or memory overmuch, for Gooch was chary of that boy's strength.

By particular request, they have consented to produce

William Tell, in order to show Clarens off in Albert; and now he is to appear in that interesting character, having had careful instruction and training from Gooch himself. On this morning, when the child arrives at the office of that gentleman, he hands him a sealed packet, desiring him as soon as he had delivered it, to hasten back, as the last rehearsal would take place in the course of the morning.

When Myra opens it, she finds a few lines from the manager.

“Wednesday morning.

“MY DEAR MRS. WISE—I pray you, excuse this liberty, and do me the favor to accept the enclosed tickets for yourself and friends. I very much desire that you shall honor the *House* with your presence to-night, that you may be among the first to hail the dawning fame of your son, the fruits of your own precepts. In short, that you may see your own noble attributes and perfections reflected in the little mirror before the foot-lights.

“Yours, respectfully,

“GOOCH.”

Myra hastily penned her thanks; but declined, on the score of having no suitable escort.

In a very short time the manager had found Doctor Brown, explained to him what he had done, and then put into his hands the two lines from Myra.

“Well?” says Doctor Brown, dryly.

“Well! yes, well! don’t you see what I want?”

“No,” said the Doctor. “How should I? You have not told me, and you don’t look at me, so that I may read it in your eyes.”

“Go to, man! Where is all that foresight, or rather quicksight, into other people’s business, which belongs to your calling? I wish you to see these ladies, and in the most business-like way (eschewing everything like gal-

Iantry), offer to conduct them to my box, on the left-hand side, near the stage. Mind, Brown, none of your blundering bluntness. Bear in mind what you are doing, and at whose behest. It is a delicate flower you will have to handle, and see that you deport yourself properly and respectfully."

"Gooch, I'll be blamed, if I did not know you were the very prince of all good fellows, I'd knock you down where you stand."

Gooch, who was quite tall and stout, clapped his hand low down on his stomach and groaned — intending to convey the idea that it would be about that region, where the doughty little man's blows would fall. The exceedingly grotesque expression of mock pain caused the doctor to roar out; and so his ire passed off, as he himself passed on his way to call on Myra and good little Minny Dun.

He simply stated to Mrs. Wise the younger, that he should come in the evening to conduct her and Minny to the theater, *nolens volens*—having engaged a box very near the stage, thinking she would most enjoy this situation. He left without giving her time to reply, and hurried down to the toy-shop.

He found Minny behind her little counter, showing her little wares to a prim little old woman. When she had concluded her sale, and dropped the little piece of money into the little drawer, she turned her attention to the little doctor; and strange as it may seem to the reader, a little blush mantled the little cheeks of each.

"Good morning, Miss Minny. Come get your bonnet and go with me to see Mrs. Wise. I have some business with you both together."

On his way he made known to Minny the nature of his errand, and instead of having any scruples to combat, the dear little creature was wild with delight at the idea. She clapped her hands, then clasped them both round

the doctor's arm, and cried, in real ecstasy: "Aweel! aweel! It will be sae delightful to see the winsome bairn in that bonny part. The good, dutiful son, the clever Albert. Oh, doctor, I'm sae glad to go, and I'm sae obleeged to ye for taking me."

The doctor felt amply repaid for all the annoyances he had known during his ten or twenty years servitude to the public, by the happiness he felt in affording such unalloyed pleasure to the good little creature by his side. In fact, there was a freshness, blended with earnestness, about her; the avidity with which she seized upon any recreation, or opportunity to vary her monotonous life, never failed to delight not only her friends, but any chance beholder.

When they were in Myra's little room, Minny did not resort to arguments or persuasions, but commenced describing, in glowing terms, the pride and joy which she (Minny) anticipated in the child's triumph.

"Oh, just to think o' the wee bit bairn toddling about on the beautiful stage, in that sweet character!" And thus Minny rattled on, with wild joyousness — sometimes kissing Myra, and almost kissing the doctor in her childish glee. Once or twice she came very near upsetting the old lady. Presently Myra, without having had the slightest previous intention of accepting the invitation, found herself as much elated with proud expectancy as is possible for any one to be. And there sat Dr. Brown smiling, and sometimes laughing hilariously, and all the time gazing fondly on Minny.

At length the doctor jumped up, and, looking at his watch, declared he had quite forgotten an important engagement, reminded the two friends to be ready, and left them.

During the whole time passed as above described, the old lady sat moodily rocking herself without speaking a word. When the doctor had gone, she roused up,

and said gruffly, "Well, Myra, I did not think, after all your sorrows, that you could have any heart in you to play the fool in this way."

"Grandma, don't bother me. I have made up my mind to go, and there is no use in throwing obstacles in the way, or croaking either. I should think you would wish me the relaxation of going out once in a year. Everything in God's beautiful world has been closed to me so long."

"Ah! Myra, well do I know that there is no use in talking to such a girl as you are. You were always self-willed and obstinate about one or two things—good in all else. You never would, nor never will, I fear, listen to the sober voice of reason, when the syren one of love whispers." Seeing a gesture of impatience, and a flush of vexation overspreading the pale face of her daughter, she went on, with an assumed show of temper, herself: "Now you are off again! Dear me, what a life I do lead! Well, I don't care. I'll speak if the house comes down over my head. You are not satisfied with starting the poor child off on the road to ruin, but you must e'en travel the same broad, downward path yourself."

"Aweel! aweel! Now dinna fash, grandam, it will all turn out weel and right in the end. Mind what I tell ye. Wait and see."

"Yes! 'all's well that ends well.' Every fool knows that; but this is not agoing to turn out well. Mind what *I* tell you. Wait and see that, Minny Dun!" and she hobbled out of the room, with an injured and vexed look.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE AMBUSH.

"THEN bursting broad, the boundless shout to heaven,
From many an hundred hearts ecstatic sprung."

"My plots fall short, like darts which rash hands throw,
With an ill aim, that have too far to go."

MISS LINDSAY sat in her splendid boudoir waiting for her lover. She was on this evening looking radiantly beautiful. She had received a note in the morning, with "Colonel Murray's compliments, begging to be allowed the honor of accompanying her to the theater. At least, he hoped to be permitted to make one in her brilliant train, if he were so unfortunate as to find her monopolized for the walk." The poor girl was so blinded by vanity, so much exalted in her own estimation by those continual ovations, that she was almost beside herself. She could not see that this was not Murray's way of addressing her. She only saw that it was his handwriting, and then sat down to reply to the note, and to revel in the consciousness of this new triumph of her charms. For be it remembered, this was a very unusual attention from him, and as unexpected as it was pleasing. Hence her beaming countenance.

Murray had never seen the note; and with shame be it spoken, had not thought of Gertrude. After tea, when his servant brought his hat and cloak, his mother said,

"Conrad, Gertrude expects you this evening; I had forgotten to tell you. She expects you to go with her to the theater."

He frowned, and replied, "I do not know why she should; I have not asked her" —

"Charles Conrad Murray, you are a, a, a (brute, said the lady mentally) cynic. You must go for her; I desire it, particularly."

"Very well, madam, I will call." When he pronounced these words he did not intend to prove recreant to the promise; but as he passed into the street he saw Murdoch walking by and joined him, without giving another thought to Gertrude or his mother. They sauntered on together, talking a little, but for the most part preserving silence—for Murdoch was, as you know, a man of small speech.

They had now reached a lonely, gloomy portion of the city, where the Night Watch generally commenced his vigils. It was growing late, almost dark. An old covered bridge was on their right. At that moment a figure, closely muffled, darted from the place, and coming quickly up to Murdoch, laid her hand on his arm.

"Come with me, friend; I have waited long."

"Ha! it is some time since I have heard that Nightingale voice." Then, without taking the least notice of his companion, he followed the girl.

Murray stood there alone, like a tall, black pillar, in the faint starlight—so erect and motionless was he.

"More mysteries!" said he. After waiting a few moments for their egress from the bridge, he turned and walked slowly back. As he passed the theater the thundering sounds issuing from it startled him from his reverie; and then, and only then, did he think of Miss Lindsay.

"Well! I am a brute, as my mother said parenthetically; but I heard the hissing word when she tried to turn it into cynic. Yes; I do believe I am a brute. I will go now and ask the proud beauty's pardon."

When he entered the house he perceived at a glance

that the crowd was crushing. That deafening applause, which had at all times greeted the child's appearance had just subsided, and the little fellow was speaking.

"I must manage to hear this," said Murray, turning to the box-keeper. "Is Miss Lindsay's box full?"

"Yes, sir," said the man, grinning. "*Her* box is always crowded."

"Who is with her?"

"Well, sir, the same '*gemmen*' that always follows her; Mr. Josiah Gaines, and nine or ten others."

"Where then can I find a place, Drummond?"

"Maybe, p'r'aps I might squeeze you into a seat in the manager's box, if that 'll do."

"Lead on, sir," said Murray, dropping a piece of silver into the hand of the man.

When he arrived at the place designated, there seemed not to be space for your hand; but such a fine "open sesame" is a little piece of silver, that Drummond very soon made a vacancy. Murray then proceeds to wedge himself into the place. At first his attention was wholly absorbed by the little Albert, and he found himself, ere he was aware of it, wiping his eyes.

There were two ladies sitting on the seat before him. One appeared to be a remarkably pleasing little woman; all versatility and good humor—full of quaint yet sensible criticisms on the play and performance. The other was a lady dressed in deep mourning, and so closely veiled that you could scarcely hear her voice when she replied to the questions of the merry little soul by her side. She seemed all the time to be struggling to subdue her feelings; and when Master Clarens came out again she was seized with even a more overwhelming agitation. The boy, from time to time, cast quick and anxious glances toward that box; especially at the veiled figure.

Just then there was a great sensation in the opposite box. A moment before, Murray had discovered Miss

Lindsay almost lying in the bosom of Mr. Gaines, as she turned to *speak up* to some one behind her. On resettling herself, she encountered the cold, haughty look of her betrothed. Then she turned deadly pale, and said to Gaines, "I am sick at heart, and shall surely die in ten minutes, if you do not bring me some relief." But after saying this she threw herself so heavily on his breast that he was obliged to remain and support her.

He called to a gentleman and said, "Dr. Brown is in the house; seek him out, and bring him as quickly as possible."

Amid the senseless confusion that usually waits on such scenes, he left for this purpose. Leaning over, he touched the doctor on the shoulder: "Come, come quickly! 'tis thought Miss Lindsay's about to die."

Murray heard it all, and saw it all, but he was too well posted up in Gertrude's peculiarities not to understand. He had witnessed her inimitable acting before; therefore, not a muscle of his face moved, not a fiber of his frame quivered, not even a pulse of that naturally warm heart beat the quicker when he heard that alarming announcement.

The kind little, bustling doctor whispered a few hurried words to Minny, saying as he rose, "I will return as soon as possible." On perceiving Col. Murray, he exclaimed, "God bless me, Conrad! how glad I am to see you. 'Tis most opportune. There, take my seat and guard those la" — He was jerked away without having time to finish the sentence.

When Murray had taken his place by Minny, on the front seat, he saw Gertrude carried from the house in the arms of Mr. Gaines, but without one pang of envy or jealousy.

The play proceeds. The next act develops more fully the treachery of Gesler. The noble Swiss is offered an alternative, a chance of life, by jeopardizing that of

his son — shooting an apple from the head of his darling boy. But we presume, dear reader, that you and everybody are acquainted with this thrilling story.

Murray, on turning to look at the lady at his side, meets a pair of ingenuous grey eyes, and a beaming smile ; she thus acknowledging his kindness without the slightest embarrassment, or showing any feeling of distrust, or other emotion, save that of gratitude for his implied protection. How bewitching is this naïve, simple trustfulness. He bowed to this look, and there was a tacit acquaintance established between them. But the arbitrary laws of society precluded the admissibility of his addressing a word to her, as they had not been introduced.

His attention was now attracted to the other lady, who seemed to be almost choking with suppressed sobs.

The girl at her side looked troubled, and said, “Aweel, aweel ; now deary, dinna be alarmed, we are not alone. The doctor left us in charge of his friend, Col. Murray ; as he called him before he left.”

At that name, a wild thrill ran through her frame, and she felt as if she must shriek out, and echo it, or die. A brawny but tremulous hand passed a glass of water. Murray received it, and as he raised his eyes to thank the person, he met those of the honest Night Watch. His paleness was corpse-like.

Minny laid her little hand on his arm, and said in a whisper, “Come, Murdoch, be a man ; dinna take on sae, my gude Murdoch.”

The curtain again rises. Albert is stationed with the apple on his head ; Tell has drawn the bow ; the arrow is sped. There is a stifled shriek, then all is still again. The apple falls, and the child is safe, and locked in the arms of his father.

In the roar of acclamation, that stifled shriek is forgotten by all save two persons. Even Minny has ceased to think of it ; but it rung long in the ears of the humble

Night Watch, and haunted the memory of the haughty Murray like a troubled dream.

They were leaving the house as speedily as possible, when Murdoch touched Murray and said, "Don't hurry, Colonel, wait a moment in the lobby. Mind what I say, sir, *do not hurry!*"

Murray had placed himself between the two ladies ; but the fingers of the veiled figure scarce touched his arm, though he could feel that she trembled. Lest the little hand which hung so loosely should fall away, and its owner be wheeled off in that rushing crowd, he reached under his cloak, took hold of it, and attempted to draw it forward. Oh ! what a start ! The hand quivered like something alive in his grasp. Then he felt her form hang heavily on his arm. And thus it was that he had forgotten the good Murdoch's warning injunction.

They had now arrived before some untenanted houses, which were each divided by a dark alley. Those buildings were tall, and the shadows cast from them were deep and dark. Just as Murray felt the lady fall on his arm like a dead weight, six masked figures rushed out from those dark alleys and surrounded the little party. In the twinkling of an eye their mouths were stopped. Three men seized Col. Murray, but with the strength of a Hercules, he wrenched his arms loose, as the men were trying to tie his hands behind him, and dealing right and left such blows with his clenched fist as you might suppose Vulcan did with his sledge-hammer, he had in a few seconds laid two men at his feet ; then as the third measured his length on the pavement, a fourth drew his knife, and slipping up, thrust it into his side.

"O God ! where is Murdoch ?" and he fell heavily across the prostrate bodies, with a deep groan.

The rattle of the Night Watch is heard, and Murdoch and his myrmidons came running up. All had passed so quickly, and the work of treachery and death had gone

on so quietly, that although the guard were concealed at a very short distance, nothing had occurred to give notice of the attack until Murdoch, who had waited for the child as usual to answer to the call of the house, came in sight and sprung the alarm rattle. Then they all started up, as if from the bowels of the earth.

When they arrived at the spot, they found three men apparently dead, and Murray weltering in his blood. The other three had escaped, fled at the first sound of that dread rattle. Murdoch and his men were a great terror to evil-doers, and he was a tower of strength within himself. And that rattle — Oh ! that rattle.

He looks around anxiously, but there is nothing to tell of the existence or non-existence of the two females. He gives the child into the care of one ; utters a few brief, hurried directions to another, about the body of Murray, who had fainted from loss of blood ; and then darts off in an opposite direction.

Several men take up the lifeless form, and placing it on a litter of old boards, found hard by, they move off. The man who has the child in charge, conveys him to the place designated by Murdoch ; the other is left to guard the fallen assailants until the watch shall rally and remove them to the guard-house.

No sooner had these two parties separated, and were out of sight, than the three ruffians came to life, sprang to their feet, and seizing the solitary guard pitched him headlong into the gutter, and scampered off.

When Johnson, the man entrusted with the child, arrived at the hovel, he found Minny wringing her hands and sending forth such wails as only a little Scotch body could send. The poor old lady ! There *she* sat ; her eyes closed, her grey hair hanging in tags from under her night-cap, rocking herself furiously, and crying out,

“I knew it ! I knew it ! I said it would be so. I felt it here and here,” touching her head and her heart ; “but you

would not heed the old woman ! She was always willful. Oh ! my lost children ! ”

Minny took the child, who was so much fatigued by the exertions of the evening that he slept soundly, without his little heart being troubled. He knew nothing of what had passed.

Johnson touched his cap, and said, “ Captain Murdoch ordered me to fetch the Doctor,” and vanished.

When Murdoch had started off so unceremoniously, he ran straight in the direction of the Jews’ Quarter. On arriving, he plunged into that dark alley, and reaching the dirty little court back of the house, he tries to open the door, but finds it fast. The stars only were shining, yet to one so accustomed to darkness this was sufficient. He looked around for something with which he could force the lock, but not finding anything he clenches that mall fist, and with one blow shivered the boards ; then wrenching off the iron bars, he begins to ascend the long winding steps. When he reaches the landing he must also stop to breathe before he is in the room. The little bell had tinkled but was succeeded so quickly by the entrance of Murdoch, that old Faggot was in the act of bearing the lifeless body of Myra across the room.

Such was his amazement, such the panic, on seeing Murdoch (for the Jew would much rather have met face to face Satan himself, just at that moment, than the fierce Night Watch), that he let the delicate form of his victim fall.

“ Wretched ! miserable old man ! Why have you done this ? Faggot, if it were not for your sweet daughter’s sake ; if it were not that I have loved Leah more dearly than any brother ever loved a sister, I would crush every bone in that old dried skin of yours. As it is I believe I had better kill you at once. Why should such garbage, such vile carrion, be allowed to cumber the earth longer.”

The Jew fell on his knees, and clasping his hands together, in the most abject manner whines out,

"Oh ! oh ! oh ! Mine goot sir, have mercy on thy servant."

This only inflamed the brave Murdoch, and seizing him by the nape of the neck, he jerked him to his feet, and shook him so furiously that I presume the soul would have been forced from the poor old body in a very short time, had not Leah glided from under those old clothes on the wall.

Two words of deprecation from those beautiful lips, in that peculiarly silvery voice were enough. "O Murdoch !" He slung the Jew from him, across the room, exclaiming, "Why should the strong man crush the worm ?" Then turning to Leah, he beheld her with as much surprise as admiration. Oh ! how lovely she looked ; how transcendently beautiful and bright. He approached her, and entwining his arms around her waist, embraced her tenderly.

"Leah ! Ah ! my beloved Leah, why have you hid away from me so long ? Do you no longer love your poor Murdoch."

"Dear Murdoch," said she, in a very hurried voice, not seeming to heed his looks of admiration ; "dear Murdoch, I have come to tell thee, that the accomplices in this outrage are coming at this moment into the Pandemonium ; so thou must hurry off with the lady. For God's sake do not let them find thee here, or *I* shall be the sufferer."

She turned to Myra, and kneeling down poured some restoring draught into her mouth, and kissed her ; then she seemed to listen. When springing to her feet she cried, "Away ! away, good friend, I hear them coming."

He strained that slight, beautiful girl to his rude, manly breast for a second ; then taking Myra up in his arms, like an infant, gave another look of unutterable respect, confidence, and brotherly love to Leah, which she returns tenfold, saying in a low tremulous voice, "Dear, dear Murdoch !" She opened the door, and he

commenced descending the steps, as she heard the footfall of many persons in the room adjoining.

The old Jew now gets up from his crouching attitude, where he had remained when falling from Murdoch's hand, and commenced whining, "Oh! oh! oh! It is all gone; one thousand monish! five hundred monish! Oh! fadder Abraham! It is all gone. Oh! Dat Leah! dat Leah!"

He then approached the girl with a menacing look, and uplifted hand to strike. With the ease and activity of a cat she sprang away from him. He followed her up, and while his mouth froths with impotent rage, and his eyes glare, says:

"Now may de Got of mine peoplesh curse thee! May thy mother's spirit curse thee! May thy bones be broken, and thy flesh rot, and may thou be alive to see it, and feel it, and know it! May thou be cursed in thy love, and in thy life, and unto thy death! Thou renegade from thy peoplesh, and de religion of their Got! The Got of thine Fadders!"

She holds up her finger, pointing warningly toward him.

"Peace! old man. Thou hast done enough wrong in this world, wrought enough ruin ere now without cursing thy own child! Go! go! I say, father, go to bed—to sleep, aye, to sleep! Dost thou know aught of that? Or hast thou too, murdered sleep. Poor old man, I pity thee! Would that I could help thee, poor father!"

The last exclamation was wrung from the heart of the maiden, as her eye fell on the base, craven-looking old man cowering beneath the just indignation of his noble-minded, pure-hearted daughter. It was but an instant, and then the fiend spoke.

"False! false thou art, girl, to thy kindred, and to thy peoplesh! I have seen it! my own old eyes have beheld thee in de arms of de Nazarene dog. Leah! Oh! mine Got! Leah thou must die! die de secret death which is the reward of thy apostacy. Dese old eyes have lived to see

mine own flesh and blood on de breast of de enemy of thy peoplesh. So thou must die mitin dese secret walls, comely as thou art."

When she had heard her father pronounce those fearful words, she gave one wild, startled look toward that door which opened into the adjoining room, where now waited the conspirators. Too well did the poor girl know what dreadful deeds of violence had been done, as he said, within these secret walls. But remembering that the slightest symptom of fear would only embolden him to go forward in any atrocity, and that to defy him would avail more than volumes of supplicatory prayers for mercy, she retorted —

"Do thy worst, old man! wreak thy foiled vengeance on thy helpless child. But I tell thee, my blood will cry aloud from these walls (secret as thou thinkest them), for that hour of retribution—Oh! my poor father!—the day of reckoning is hastening on for thee." She weeps. "True, I have broken one of the *ancient* laws of our people; but this has passed away; and were it not so, or I did not love this Christian, which I am proud to say I do; were it not for the influence I have with 'that vile Nazarene,' as thou dost call that good man, thy own old limbs would be quivering, and jerking, and whirling between heaven and earth at this time. Father," and she approached quite near, "thy daughter whom thou hast cursed so fearfully, has saved thy life three times."

Then she whispered something in his ear which made him shudder. She looked pityingly at him, and her sweet eyes were full of tears, as she took his hand—that cold damp hand—and kissing it, said :

"Fear not! Peace be with thee, poor father! I am still thy friend; although thou hast cursed me, and would just now have killed me."

The old man came cringingly toward her, with his—"Oh, Oh, Oh." But Leah receded from him, and suddenly disappeared.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE FALL.

"ONE struggle more, and I am free
From pangs that rend my heart in twain,
One last long sigh to love and thee,
Then back to busy life again."

WHEN Murdoch reached the bottom of that long spiral stairway, what with fatigue, want of breath, but above all, excessive agitation, he came very near falling with his precious burden. For the first time in his life, his strength failed him; so that he was obliged to rest one moment. The cool night air blowing so freshly on Myra's face, and maybe the tremendous *blows* which that pent-up heart continued to give right under her ear, as he kept her clasped in that maddening embrace, together with the cordial administered by Leah, had revived her. She opened her eyes, and looking frantically around, closed them again, and nestling like a little bird in his bosom, sighs and says—"Dear one, I have found you at last, and am happy."

Poor Murdoch! Alas! poor Murdoch! think of Leah, dear good Murdoch! This proud lady clinging so fondly to thee! so like a tender fledgling resting in thy bosom, is thinking of another. Poor Murdoch!

The man is beside himself; he strains her to his faithful, honest bosom; but hearing approaching footsteps, he takes her up in his arms, and passes on. Being now unable to proceed further, he calls a hack, and as he places her in it, finds she has fallen asleep like a child in its mother's arms.

The motion of the vehicle awakes her, and clinging still more closely to him, she sighs out—"They shall not tear me from you again, my beloved! We are once more united, and whether there be guilt, or shame, or degradation I care not—I am thine now, throughout time and eternity."

Poor Murdoch! It does seem as if he were too severely tried. He believes that last protestation of undying affection is addressed to him; he thinks it applicable to their peculiar situations. He believes it to be an uncontrollable gush of fervent love, the reward of his own mighty devotion. He again strains her to his heart; but he is past all utterance. Surprise, rapture, and gratitude have made him mute.

Again the lady murmurs, and her voice is not louder than the rustle of the zephyr's wing, or the soft sweet note of the fabled bulbul. He inclines his ear to catch the syllables. She, nestling still closer, says:

"How did you find me out, dear one? Ah! yes, I know; you are always on the alert; you have long been my guardian spirit, my brave, my noble, my worshiped Conrad."

Murdoch started as if he had been bitten, stung, or pierced to the heart. Had he received the point of a sharp instrument into his heart's core, his whole frame could not have been more suddenly relaxed. His arms dropped lifeless by his side, and he suffered poor Myra to slip from his embrace down to his feet, in the bottom of the carriage. This aroused her from her happy obliviousness, and she began to weep; then followed heart-rending sighs and sobs.

It was not in the nature of Murdoch to witness suffering without trying to succor. So now he raised the weeping lady, and placing her on the back seat, takes his opposite to her without speaking. Poor Murdoch! He had been hurled from heaven without any preparation,

and he felt himself bruised and mangled — nay, crushed by the fall. Poor man ! there had been no little jutting point by the way to break that mighty fall.

The lady continued to sob, and when the good-hearted Night Watch essayed to utter a few words of comfort, his voice was so changed that he started himself, and Myra did not recognize it. Presently he succeeded in calming himself, and said, in a cold, curt, rather severe voice :

“ Madam, I beg you will compose yourself, and believe that you have nothing to fear. I have saved you from a den of thieves and ravishers, at the peril of my own life ; and am now conducting you to your child and your friends.”

“ Oh ! Murdoch, is it you ? God bless you, good, kind Murdoch. What do I not owe you ? ” and she caught up his hand and bedewed it with tears of gratitude.

But Murdoch was now wide awake. That was a hard fall he had received, he will not dream again. And then dawned on his memory the words Minny had once spoken in such an oracular voice to him.

“ Think not of her, Murdoch. Think not of that proud lady. Would you take to your honest bosom the empty casket, when the gem has gone to enrich that of another ? ” And then, somehow, his thoughts revert to Leah ; and her beautiful face and graceful form rise up before him. Although the poor fellow had been so bewildered by Myra’s presence, that he did not, at the time, perhaps, appreciate her extreme beauty, yet it now came up before his mental vision, perhaps greatly augmented by the check he had just received.

They had arrived at the hovel. Murdoch alights, and handing Myra from the carriage, in the most deferential way opened the door, and she tottered in, falling into the arms of the affectionate Minny. Murdoch jumped into the hack, and bidding the man drive as fast as possible, he leaned from the window, and taking off his cap, bared

his breast to the cold, night wind. After awhile was heard in the distance, that same calm, sonorous voice: "Three o'clock, all's well."

Myra, when urged by her friends to give them an account of her rescue, can tell of nothing more than her ride home in the hack, and Murdoch's coldness, which seemed to wound her greatly; and then she commenced sobbing again, until she went into hysteria. Minny and the doctor sat by her the whole night.

When Johnson arrived at Murray's mansion, he found Doctor Brown bustling about over the wound as he dressed it.

"Ah, yes!" said he, in answer to Johnson, "I'll be ready in a minute. This patient will do nicely. I've dressed this wound beautifully; nothing very serious either, thank God! It would have been too great a pity for this noble fellow to have been put away so slily by such caitiff wretches in the dark. Methinks such a fine fellow should die gloriously on the field of battle, in defense of his country; or else, in shielding beauty (which he was trying to do, when he got that little *love-liek* in the side). But still, not by a parcel of pickpockets. Maybe now it might be better, after all, to fall sweetly asleep in the arms of his faithful old wife, after having blessed and made happy two generations or more. What think you, Johnson?"

"Well, it's hard to say, yer honor. I reckon it's no odds though, how a feller lays hisself down, so he gits up the right way, and then travels the right road when he does git up. I reckon it's no odds at all at all."

Having given the patient a composing draught, and seeing him fall off to sleep, he takes his way with unwonted alacrity toward the hovel, where we next find him.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE COURTSHIP.

“SHE that with poetry is won,
Is but a desk to write upon ;
And what men say of her, they mean
No more than on the thing they lean.”

THESE two good creatures sat there watching the disturbed sleep of the unfortunate Myra. Sometimes she raves, then beseeches, and anon commands. Now she calls out in a frantic voice, and brandishing her little hands aloft, cries,

“No, no ! I never will believe it. Father it is false ! Why did you tell me this cunningly-devised tale, but to win me to your purposes ? I knew it not, but no matter. I should still have loved him as madly as now. Ah ! Walter ! I saw the good youth ! I closed my eyes, but I heard the report ; yet I saw not the shot.” Then her voice would sink into a low breeze-like murmur, and she would contract her body, as if she were trying to creep into some loving bosom. Then she would smile plaintively, and sigh, and say, “Dear Conrad, I am very happy.”

The old lady slumbered in her chair ; the child slept soundly on his couch. All was still and peaceful. The poor patient has at last sunk to rest.

Reader, is it any wonder that the watchers should have hitched their chairs nearer, little by little, until they got to be jammed up as close together as chairs ever do get to be ; and that their hands should have been attracted to each other, and that the doctor’s lips should have found a very

short and easy road to Minny's hand, and a still shorter and quicker one to her lips ; those little, tempting, cherry lips.

But you may think it strange, and maybe wrong, that Minny was so ingenuous and innocent as not to chide, but just returned kiss for kiss simply, and it maybe only because she saw it gave him pleasure ; still it made her, she did not know wherefore, very happy.

Doctor Brown drew a long breath, for he would not have acknowledged to a sigh. Yet he could feel, and sigh, and weep too, for the woes of others ; and little man as he was, he had as big a heart and as great a soul as either Murdoch or Murray ; was also wrought upon by the same passions, yet without the devastating whirlwinds, or the scathing lightning. So then he did really heave a deep, real, *bona fide* sigh, and said in a slow and would-be steady voice,

" Dear, good little Minny, I have many things to say to you, and some questions to ask, which I want you to answer like yourself, with candor and decision. And you see, Minny, we must necessarily converse more familiarly than we have ever done before."

" Certainly, doctor, if you wish it," said the girl.

" Ah ! that's it at once. I don't want you to be so formal. That 'yes, sir,' and 'no, Doctor,' must be thrown aside, and a more familiar, and a — and a — a dearer name substituted. In short, good girl, you would please me much better if you would call me by my Christian name, instead of so much siring, and doctoring, and Browning."

" Aweel ! I would like it too, but that's a' I ever heard. I dinna ken mair than that. Tell it to me, sir. Let me hear the ither one."

" True, Minny, I never have told you anything of my family. Now, dear one, I was named for my father, who was named for his father, who was named for *his* father, and so on for such a number of generations that I can

not count back. And moreover, every one of them save your humble servant, Minny, was born in your own country, and claim noble descent from some lairds, who were descended, a-w-a-y back, from Rob Roy, and some other big folk."

Minny could not suppress a merry titter.

"What are you laughing at, Miss Dun?" said he, straightening himself back in his chair.

"Go on, sir; I could na help it. I was sae joyed to hear you say this." He felt himself mellowed by this lubricating application to his wounded family pride. It was the first time the little man had ever left this, his weakest point, uncovered, and the girl learned in the course of that conversation that he was morbidly sensitive on the subject of his lineage. Neither could he abide his plebeian name of Brown. Minny did not like this trait. The good, little, honest soul had no fancy for reflected greatness, and when he commenced again to speak of his ancestors, she struck in :

"Aweel, now, never mind ony mair about that; gie us the name. What is the name o' this noble scion o' the McGregors?"

He looked at her very seriously for a moment, and seemed to be debating with himself whether he should get vexed or not, and his eyes glistened for that length of time; then they twinkled, and the contracted muscles about the mouth relaxed, and naturally resolved themselves into a bright smile. And then Minny gave one of her most gleesome laughs, and taking his hand, she put it to her forehead and adds,

"Aye, and ye can be bright and winsome too, as weel as ony o' them, an' ye will. So now tell us the name."

"Gabriel," said he.

"Gramercy! it's too lang; Oh, my gude man, I tell ye it's too lang to call ye by every day; so I'll just call ye Gabe, dear Gabe and gude Gabe, and a' that."

"That's it, Minny, that's the very idea. I never did meet with anybody before who could read my thoughts, and anticipate my wishes."

The girl jumped at him, and just as a wild, playful child would do, imprints three or four kisses on his cheeks and forehead, and running her fingers through his hair, puts it back and kisses him again.

"There it is! I was just beginning to feel my need of one of them *sweet articles*, when you tender me three or four," and they laugh hilariously. "After awhile, I shall not know how to get along without you," said he.

"Now, dear Gabe"—but her mouth was closed, and there was a smothered sort of a smacking noise, loud enough to disturb the poor patient, who moaned and wept. "Oh! I am so lonely! I feel so desolate!" Then all was still as before.

Presently the doctor resumed—"I do believe, Minny, I do believe in my heart that I am in love with you! If it is not that, I do not know then what it is. I somehow feel like I always want to be near you, and certainly do find myself more contented then than at any other time. I always think that you are watching for me, Minny, and that your little face grows brighter when I do come. And, Oh! Minny, you are every way a dear little thing, and you have, I do know, the sweetest little mouth."

Then there was the same smacking noise as before, and the girl seems half stifled with something or other, as she tries to say, "Oh! dear Gabe! Dear, gude Gabe!"

"Now listen to me, Minny. I have something to tell you which will astonish you, no doubt. I never have courted a woman in my life. I am now twenty-eight years old, and if I do not love *you*, then I never have loved anybody. I believe I shall be happy with you, Minny, and wretched without you. Now, child, you who are so shrewd about most things, tell me, is not this enough to

begin with. Come, speak, Minny, don't stop to blush. I'm in haste."

"Uncanny man that ye are; I have nae thought o' blushing. I was only reflecting like, o'er the subject."

"Well, don't take time to reflect; I'm all impatience for your decision. I had thought your heart would have answered at once."

"Aweel now! did the warld ever hear o' sic a mon? Wad ye mak me judge and jury too, and have me pass sentence on my ain case?"

"Speak, Minny; speak, child; I'm in a flame just now."

"Weel, Gabriel, if the lassie was o' your ain way of thinking, and happened to be a leettle bit blinded wi' luve for Mr. Gabriel Brown, of the stock o' the Rob Roys, then I should say that that would be sufficient."

The little man started to his feet, and looked at Minny with amazement; then seating himself, with a sigh said, "Miss Dun, in what way am I to understand your words?"

"In the right way, I trust, doctor."

"Am I to believe that I have thrown away my affection on you? That—that—that I have squandered"—

"That's just as ye happen to think o' me. That depends on your ain opinion of me, doctor."

"O Minny! have I garnered up my heart's treasures in this pretty little casket, only to have them thrown out by such a careless hand?"

She did not speak.

"Minny, I thought you loved me even as well as I do you. I believed, when you suffered me to kiss your sweet mouth, and returned it so heartily, that this was the sanction and seal of the tacit compact between us. Miss Dun, do ladies kiss and suffer themselves to be kissed, and mean nothing by it? Do they? I have no fancy for romance in real life. I thought we would glide along smoothly,

without provoking the fates. What did you mean, Miss Dun, by thus leading me on to commit and to make as great a fool of myself as any school-boy?"

He looks so distressed and ludicrously wretched that the girl could hold out no longer. Then she laughed and cried, and threw her arms around his neck and said — but she could not say it for some time, so carried away was she by this mirthful mood, "Dear, dear Gabe, I was only trying you. You seemed a leettle bit too confident, too secure ; but I believe it'll do. I think your account o' yourself will be sufficient."

It was agreed upon then, and they became engaged ; the doctor stipulating that as soon as all parties were well again, that they would marry "*each other.*" After this, they talked of their feelings, the rise and progress of the same in their souls. Then a calm succeeded, and there they sat, with clasped hands, listening to the beating of each other's hearts, and the low breathing of the patient.

Presently, Minny got to narrating her own history : how she was born on Lord Dalkeith's estate in old Scotland, her father having been that gentleman's steward ; how she had been induced, after the death of her parent, to come to America, and had finally concluded to settle down in peace and independence in the little toy-shop ; on the beatitude of which mode of life she expatiated warmly.

Seeing a smile on the doctor's face, she exclaims with animation — "Aweel, now, ye may smile an ye will, but there is something right pleasant in being 'monarch of all I survey,' even though that be a little toy-shop and sma' back room, and a crust o' bread, but always with sunshine in the heart and a gude fire on the hearth. You need na laugh sae, dear Gabe."

"Go on, Minny ; go on, child, I love to hear you talk ; indeed I do."

"I have four little rooms to my house ; the front room is the store and hall, the back one is my parlor, and some-

times kitchen. It is always a comfortable place for my grandmother, who is more contented than mony a lady in her palace."

"True, most true. I know a case in point. Poor old Mrs. Murray."

Minny continued her narrative—"One of the upper rooms I have loaned to a widow. Poor Lucy May has seen better days. She has had, I think, the misfortune at some time to offend against society, and was perhaps thrust out. She, poor thing, now hides away from an intolerant and doubtless a more sinning world than herself. I know not what her fault was, I care not what her career has been : I have nothing to do with that. It is the present and the future with which I have to deal. I know that her life is blameless now, and I think her heart is right, being full of love to God. I have helped her as best I could with my little means, in every way that was open to me; and now I am reaping my reward. I could na have gone wi' you to-night, dear Gabe, to see that sweet play, I could na be sitting here wi' poor, dear Myra now, if my gude Lucy May were not there to tak' my place by my helpless grandmither."

"What do you get a month, Minny?"

"I do not rent it. I mak' nae charge. She helps me about many things since she has recovered her health."

"Good heavens! You don't tell me you had to take charge of a sick woman. Poor, dear little thing! How could you accomplish this?"

"Oh, very weel. What merit wad there be in doing a gude deed, if it cost nothing? All things were added, and I found every day, that the way was opened by which I somehow obtained the necessary supplies for the poor sufferer."

"How, dear Minny? In what way were they furnished?"

"Oh, in many ways, too tedious to mention. God's is a vast storehouse! It never gives out."

"Well, child, I do believe you are an angel of mercy, sent here to do such things ; and that's the upshot of the whole—only you are the prettiest and best among them all.

"But, Minny, my dear,"—the Doctor had learned to transpose the words ; it used to be "My dear Minny"— "Now, Minny, my dear, you said, I think, that this poor Lucy May was, or had been an outcast from society. For what offense was it ?"

"I told you I did not know. I do not wish to know. The subject has never been brought up between us, and never shall be, unless *she* introduces it, and thinks it will relieve her heavy heart to talk."

"But, Minny, I do not think I approve of my little wife being on quite such familiar terms with an outcast."

"Doctor Brown, sorry am I that ye hae spoken that word. I dinna exactly ken yet, but I hardly think I do luve you just quite as weel as I did."

"But you see my motive, my dear little girl. I think my Minny is as pure as any of those bright ones, who continually do shine around the 'Great White Throne ;' therefore she should not come in contact with infamy."

"Ah, sir ! ye should na judge. Ye dinna ken your ain heart ; then how can you judge of anither's. Christ has said, that the angels (whom ye talk sae much about, and ken sa little) do rejoice more over one repentant sinner, than over ninety and nine just persons. And ye know, if ye were your ain sel' a good shepherd, and did one o' your flock go astray, ye wad leave all, and go in pursuit o' him that was lost. So you see, Gabriel, God careth for these stray lambs. Now, dear one, do ye hope ever to get to heaven ?"

"To be sure I do, Minny. Everybody has that hope in some shape or other."

"Then dinna ye ken, that heaven will be full o' repentant sinners? The Saviour loved sinners, you know, my friend,

more than ye can ever love wife, or child, or ony other thing."

"Ah! I give it up, darling. I give it all-up. You have converted me. I am all sorts of a proselyte to any creed you may choose to hold and declare. I do believe you can give a reason for everything that you may do and believe, which would be satisfactory to God himself."

"Ah! God is not half so hard on us as we are on each other. I would rather fall into the hands o' the living God than into those o' my fellow worms."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE OLD JEW'S FAMILY.

"HATH not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian?"

It will be remembered when Gertrude Lindsay entered the room of the Jew, that Leah suddenly disappeared. The girl lingered, with her ear to the wall, until she had heard all that passed between the proud beauty and her instrument of crime, poor Leah's father. She also learned from what the little black child said, the condition of the family in the hovel, and was confirmed in her surmises, that their nefarious designs were now to be put in operation against its inmates. In the interview between the little slave and the old man, the whole plot was made known; and as quickly did Leah form her plans to forestall and overthrow it.

This poor girl, almost from her infancy, had been compelled to live and act that despicable thing, a spy, an eaves-dropper. She had been trained to it by her mother, who was in all things honest and high-minded; and she believed, conscientiously, that the motive with the end in view, would sanctify the means and ennable the deed. To watch, listen, and prevent harm; forestall and hinder crime; to redress wrongs and protect innocence, had been the life-time work of poor Rachel, the mother of Leah, and wife of Nathan, the Jew merchant. This marriage had been one of family expediency; the parties having in

view the combining and consolidating their forces against the Christian.

I know that this sort of rancor between the children of Israel and the Gentile world, has, in a great measure, subsided ; and if their condition is ameliorated, and the contempt in which they were held has given place to better feelings, we shall ascribe it to the mild and just laws of our glorious Republic, which holds out the same immunities, and affords the same protection to the alien as to her own children. But then, I ask, if that instinctive distrust of the Jew, the contempt felt for their pursuits, the scorn for their characteristic servility, and above all, their unholy love of money, their usurious exactations from the necessities of all who may chance to fall in their way, do not now, as ever, move the worst dispositions of our nature toward them ? Besides, the place where we have seen fit to locate our "*dramatis personæ*," is one which has retained many more of the primitive usages as well as national traits of this migratory people than any other one, perhaps, in our country.

But to our story : this match had been arranged without the mutual consent of the parties, for the common weal of the confederacy established in the Jews' Quarter of the city of —, and for the private injury of her citizens. Poor Rachel had never felt any other emotion than fear and dislike toward the creeping, cringing thing she was forced to marry ; and from that time to the end of her life, she swerved not from the course she had marked out for herself. She had no enjoyments, no recreations. She sought none ; her whole being seemed absorbed in doing good and thwarting evil. She was, therefore, as I have said, a secret spy on her household. The amount of misery which she prevented — the sufferings she had relieved — must be her extenuation for this breach of conjugal faith. The poor, isolated woman felt herself justified in the sight of her Creator ; and as to his crea-

tures, she had nothing to do with their approval or condemnation. The fiendish passions and pursuits of her husband, the contracted minds and petty superstitions of her people, together with the scorn in which they were held, had made her what she was—a prisoner within the walls of that dismal old brick house.

In dying she bequeathed her office to her daughter, Leah—initiating her into the dark mysteries of her father's character, and also into many a secret of the house, its gloomy passages, rooms, walls, etc. Many a hidden stairway, secret corridor and cunning device, had been planned by Rachel, of which her husband had no knowledge. Leah now was entrusted with the keys, and made the unseen mover of all the secret springs.

Not so with her other daughter, Hagar; the mother had no confidence in this child.

There never had been any congeniality of feeling between the two sisters; but Leah, like her mother, mourned over her depravity, and many times had stood between this neophyte in vice, and her hard-hearted father: acting as mediator, only to receive, as recompence, treachery and hatred.

Murdoch, the Night Watch, had known this family from boyhood; and, until old Faggot had become so groveling, by the indulgence of that soul-killing passion, had been in the habit of paying them frequent visits. While his wife lived, there was none of that loathsome affectation of poverty about the husband. The miser he was, but on a more enlarged scale; and numberless petty meannesses were concealed from the high-minded Rachel, else would she have spurned him as a worthless cur-dog. The one redeeming trait, the one human feeling which avarice had left in that little murky soul, was intense animal affection, and boundless admiration for his wife.

When this poor lady found that the sands of life were so near run out she dispatched Leah after Murdoch. When

he came, he approached the bedside of his dying friend with a bowed head and broken heart. She had been almost the only friend the youth had ever known. She had assisted him in all ways; sometimes by loans of money, or presents of clothing; in short, she was his benefactress. She had afforded him the facilities of getting an education sufficient to enable him to embrace any reputable calling, either in the mechanic arts, or in commerce. But he had no patrons who could or would help him on to promotion. He, therefore, became what we have seen, the guardian of the downy or thorny pillows, as the case may be, of the luxurious and wealthy citizens of the city of —.

The "Night Watch" was an orphan, the offspring of a Jew father and Christian mother. This alliance (prohibited in the synagogue) brought much sorrow and annoyance to the parties; but it was a match of affection; so they endured all things patiently unto the end. Both parents died suddenly; the last induced by grief for the loss of the first. After this, Murdoch became almost an inmate of the house of Mrs. Nathan; having been consigned to her care by his dying mother.

He had by nature ardent feelings; an idolatrous love for the beautiful (female beauty) was the first sensation which made itself comprehensible to his young mind. Mrs. Nathan was exceedingly beautiful and fascinating; and the boy, youth, and man, had accustomed himself to look up to her as a superior being. His feelings for her were those of adoration. Rachel saw this with regret; but hoped he would transfer this affection, with some mitigation, to her second self, her daughter Leah. But as yet she had witnessed nothing to encourage her. She had not seen one look of admiration, or one demonstration of regard other than such as would move the pure heart of a brother toward a good, gentle little sister. He loved Mrs. Nathan, who was still a very young woman, and for the present, this passion was sufficient to fill all the interstices

of his huge heart. Leah, she knew, would be beautiful when matured ; she had also seen, for some time, that her child loved the orphan boy with all the fervor and enthusiasm which belonged to her oriental blood.

Rachel had studied the temper and heart of her foster son ; maybe to check the unholy passion she saw there for herself ; maybe for something else ; but she learned that much of his devotion was induced by the mystery thrown around her, and that it was strengthened by the insuperable barrier between them, preventing his too close approximation. She knew also, that familiarity and easy access, would interrupt the growth of love on his part ; while that of poor Leah would expand and ripen to her own detriment. Hence the solemn injunction which is presently laid upon the girl.

When Murdoch drew near, and found that death had set his signet on that noble countenance, he threw himself on his knees, and for a few moments indulged the wildest grief. The patient, feeling that her sands were numbered, looked at him with a face full of anxiety. She placed the hand of Leah within his, and with a look of ineffable love, faintly whispered — “ May the blessings of the God of our people be upon you and abide with you, my children ! ”

Murdoch rushed from the room. When the mother and daughter were left alone, she made Leah comprehend that she had something of importance still to say, and asked for an exciting potion. After she had swallowed it, the feeble ray of life gleamed up for a moment, and raising herself, she said in a low whisper,

“ Come hither, child. Now listen carefully. Leah, you have never disobeyed me during your life ? ” She paused for an answer.

The girl fell on her knees, and sobbed out, “ O my mother ! how could I ? Thou never didst do wrong.”

"Then, my love, promise me without question, that you will obey my dying injunction."

"With my life will I obey thee, my sainted mother."

"You will, Leah, from this hour, veil yourself closely, and never at any time, or under any circumstances, suffer the good Murdoch to look upon your features; or caress you, or even touch your hand; but hide your face from him, and envelop yourself in profound mystery for the space of three years; not abating one moment of the time. It is half past eleven o'clock. Three years from this moment, my beloved and dutiful child, you shall be absolved from this oath; and your mother's spirit will hover near you to do you good. Remember the hour and the *moment*. My daughter, spare your father's grey hairs, and as much as in you lies, smooth his passage to the grave. Now call him and your sister; but first embrace me, my love."

When the husband and child came in, she took an affectionate, but calm leave of them; folded her arms, closed her eyes, and fell asleep, not in Jesus, I presume—for this promise is only to Christians—but that pure soul winged its way back to him who gave it, and has I hope found a resting-place in father Abraham's bosom.

This has been a tedious digression; but we deemed it necessary, in order to explain and extenuate the seeming infatuation of the gentle and refined Leah for the apparently rough-natured Murdoch.

The girl, as has been before stated, remained with her ear to the wall until she had learned all she wished; then she stole softly to her room, enveloped herself closely in her wrappings, and returning sat down near the same spot until her father should leave the house. She heard his soliloquy, wherein he had accused her of treachery; she also heard him touch the counter-spring (as he called it) and chuckle over the thought, that he had put it beyond

her power to thwart his diabolical enterprise. All this she did not regard, but she was in agony lest she should be foiled in her efforts to meet Murdoch in time to make him set the watch near the hovel.

While she sat on the floor, her head against the panel, she heard her father exclaim ; "Oh, oh, oh ! It is just three years dis day sence my poor, dear Rachel was gathered to her peoplesh ;" and she could hear him beat his breast.

The girl commenced a rapid computation of time, and finding it was even as the old man said, dropped her head on her breast, and wept in silence.

The miser at last leaves the room ; then Leah also stole out, taking her way toward the covered bridge; where she waited full an hour before Murdoch made his appearance, in company, as has been stated, with Col. Murray.

When they had again sought the bridge, she revealed to him as succinctly as she could, the discovered plot, with her intention to save the poor lady and her family.

"Now, dear Murdoch, thou hast not, I hope, forgotten the road to our house ? Thou knowest the way to the spiral steps, then force the door, if it be fast, and enter quickly. I will see thee by twelve o'clock, but not before half past eleven."

When he would have taken her to his manly, affectionate bosom, she stepped aside, eluding him, as she had never failed to do for three years, and said, "The time will soon come, Murdoch ; my probation will end in a few hours, then I can without sin suffer myself to be folded to the breast of my foster brother, as in my childhood.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE GOOD WIFE.

"How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out,
And court the offices of soft humanity !
Like thee, reserve their raiment for the naked,
Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,
Or mix the pitying tear with those that weep."

DEAR, sensible, and I hope obliging reader, let your imagination spread her wings, and with me keep pace with the old scythe-man for one year, including the alternations of time and season. Another winter has come and gone, without any of the traces which the stern hoary-headed traveler usually leaves in the track of his ruthless strides. There were changes, but not such as are painful to contemplate or recount.

Good Doctor Brown and dear little Minny are married. They live together most happily in a pretty cottage with charming verandahs. The aged grandam, as we were ever pleased to hear the little woman call her, is installed in one of the best rooms. All the familiar objects which had made that little old back room so agreeable to her, everything she prized, whether for association or convenience, had been transferred to this room; so that the old lady scarce felt the change. Her milk-white hair reposes as smoothly beneath the little snowy cap as ever; her fine cambric kerchief is folded as primly over the silver-grey luster dress as for the last fifty years, and she herself is just as happy and querulous as when we met her first. That good little granddaughter has so smoothed

the declivity that the gentle downward passage is not felt.

Minny is looking prettier and somewhat stouter, is as ever full of kind feelings and active benevolence. She is always on the *qui vive* to do somebody some good. Day by day her face beams with happiness, and she as regularly sends up a fervent prayer of gratitude to God for the means afforded her to manifest her love to His creatures. And Gabriel, "dear Gabe," is he happy? Can you doubt it? Let that elastic step, as he bounds along on his way, fulfilling his professional duties, answer. That fresh, hale countenance, that calm, untroubled, blue eye, twinkling and merry, that genial smile, what tale do they tell? And then that nicely brushed black coat, the snowy plaits of the shirt bosom; but above all, those much improved sandy locks, which a year ago were so carroty and elfin, do they not testify to the presence of some busy, thrifty, loving little body? Ah yes! would that the world were full of little Minnys, for the sake of all forlorn little Gabriels.

The girl has carried her own sunshine into that house, as she does everywhere. Whenever she appears, dark places become luminous, and crooked ways straight. O Minny, thou art a second little *Dot*, and when we have said this, we can pronounce no higher praise. Like *Dot*, Minny has a little baby, and "just like its father," all the clever ones exclaim, as from time immemorial. But this time, as generally, the verdict is false; for the little baby girl, the little Myra, is just like her pretty little mother.

When Minny was married, and left her humble home to occupy a better one, she installed Lucy May in the toy-shop, placing with her for company and assistance an orphan child, whom she had found weeping in the street on her wedding day, as she passed from church to her new home. So she commemorated this

event by an action which, if angels are permitted to review scenes in this world, must have caused joy in heaven.

They were dashing on in a very fine “turn out,” accompanied by a few of the Doctor’s particular friends, when Minny despaired a child in the street, who looked lonely and miserable. She instantly pulled the check-string, and with much earnestness explained to her husband that she wished to alight for a moment, that she might speak to the child. Gabriel’s face flushed, and looking up at his friends he could see that they were surprised, and he thought he detected a smile of derision on their fashionable faces; therefore the sensitive little man commenced a remonstrance.

“Ah hist! dinna fash! dinna fash! I will not detain ye lang; but I must speak to the puir suffering bairn.”

He was about to utter a rejoinder, when she put her mouth to the trumpet and ordered the coachman to stop and open the door. Then with the most bewitching naïveté, said, “Ah Gabe! I know ye too well! Ye wad na see the puir little chiel perish in the street, amang the gay and grand folks, on your happy wedding day.”

He said no more, but jumped out and handed his wife from the carriage. The child at the time could give no account of herself. She was sick; a fever raged in her blood, and she seemed stupified from pain. Doctor Brown saw that she would indeed die if left there. At Minny’s request, he lifted her into the carriage, and they drove on.

They nursed the sick child through a long and severe illness. When she had entirely recovered she was placed as stated, with Lucy May. They had adopted and given her their name — they called her Jennie Brown.

Minny, with the sanction of the Doctor, invited Myra and her grandmother to live with them.

“No, no, Minny,” said the old lady, “God only knows how much I do thank you, child! But best not; I should

die of idleness. I think it would go hard with me, now, to sit down and hold my hands in a friend's house. Let us have a place of our own, even if it is a *shanty*."

Minny comprehended fully the feeling, and urged them no further. On their way home she was sad and silent; then rousing up she said, "Aweel, dear husband, I dinna think I can ever sleep mair in my nice bonny home, while puir Myra an' the auld lady are in sic a place. They must be better fixed, else I shall sleep wi' my een wide open, all my days. Choose now, gude man, atween the twa."

The Doctor laughed, and came near forgetting himself so far as to embrace his little wife on the street.

Just then the Jew came walking up—not creeping: "Good morning, sir, said the Doctor. "Is any one occupying that neat, cottage-looking house, over the way, yonder?"

"Which one?" said Mr. Nathan, the Jew clothing merchant.

"The one with latticed windows."

"No, der is nobody living dere, now."

"When is your rent due from Mrs. Wise."

"It is due now, dis very hour. I is on my way dere to git it."

"Well, Mr. Nathan, propose to Mrs. Wise to take the cottage."

"Oh! oh! mine Got! It is too much more monish dan she will be able to pay me."

"Never mind that, sir. Do as I have requested; and when her means fail, I will make up the deficit."

In an instant he whipped out a little ink-horn from his pocket, and a scrap of paper, saying, "Write, write." The Doctor gave him the note, and passed on.

The next day saw Minny as busy as the busiest of all busy things—a hen with one chicken—arranging the cottage for her friends. The day after sees them domiciled

as if they had lived there all their lives. Thanks now to little Minny *Brown*.

Clarence is charmed with the exchange. His salary, and the donations to him from the patrons of the drama, have all been given as glad offerings to his mother and grandmother. His little heart swells with pride, and feels too big for his little body, when he thinks that he supports his parents—“*his family*.”

The golden-haired, sunny-faced, beautiful boy has grown some, and is greatly improved. Mr. Gooch has watched over and guarded him, as if he were the apple of his eye.

Col. Murray lingered long in his sick room, vacillating between life and death. A fever succeeded to the disastrous events of that night; not so much from the wound, as the disordered state of his nervous system, and the distracted state of his mind. The wild hopes which he had for one brief half-hour suffered to spring up in his breast, with their sudden overthrow, were more than his excitable nature could endure. There were many alternations, and it was a matter of great uncertainty whether he would ever arise from that bed; or if he did, whether his mind would recover its equipoise.

To-day he has awakened from a long obliviousness. Looking around, for the first time for many weary months, he seems to be conscious of what is passing in the room. He speaks very feebly:

“James, where is my daughter?”

“Oh! thank God, master! I am so rejoiced to see you sensible once more. I thank the Lord for that, anyhow;” and the negro began to weep.

“I am greatly obliged to you, James, my good boy; but I hope you do not expect or require me to cry, too?”

“Lor! no, sir; but we never did expect to see you look

so natural-like and sensible any more. So I couldn't help crying for joy. Hope you will excuse the liberty, Mas'r Charles?"

"Certainly. But James, who has been here during my illness?"

"Oh, Lors a marcy! everybody on God's yarth."

"That will do, James. Go and tell Tivvy to come in and bring the child."

When the little Genevieve came, she seemed to understand at a glance that her father was better. She clapped her hands and shouted, and sprang upon the bed, and literally stopped his breath with caresses.

"Oh! dear, dear papa! we thought you were going to die, and papa, that pretty lady"—

"Hush," said Tivvy; and he saw the maid squeeze the child's arm.

"Poor cousin Gerty cried her eyes out, when that pretty la"—

"Come, honey, let's go," said Tivvy, taking up the child.

"Put her down," said Murray. "Go on, daughter; what is it?"

"Papa, I think you ought to love cousin Gertrude."

"What for, my love?"

"Because she loves you so much, and grandma says she is *s-o r-i-c-h*. Papa please marry cousin Gerty," said she, kissing her father. "Won't you, dear papa?"

"Do you want papa to marry her, my darling?"

"I don't know; I reckon so."

Then she put her little ruby lips to his ear, and whispered very softly: "Tivvy says, cousin Gertrude is almost dead to marry you, and that she will die soon, if you don't let her."

Murray gave Tivvy a black look, and continued to frown. The child tried to wipe off with her handker-

chief, those disfiguring signs of vexation, while Tivvy, in great embarrassment and some alarm, adds :

"Lors! Now, Miss Vevy, I didn't do no sich a thing, now."

"You did, Tivvy. I heard you tell uncle Jim so; and you said you knew it, because she used to steal in here, when papa was out of his senses, and kiss him, and kneel down by him, and cry, and all that."

"That will do, my love; come run away to the governess. Tivvy, I wish to speak to you, and when you have carried the child, return immediately."

Tivvy looked worried. "Lor! Mas'r Conrad, what does you want? I'm so busy; won't Jim do?"

"Tivvy, you have forgotten yourself. Do you dare debate whether you will obey me or not?"

"No, sir," said the maid; and taking up the child, hurried out.

"When they had gone, Murray sighed and exclaimed, "Poor Gertrude! I wish to God I could provoke her to discard me. I would very *meekly* submit to the sentence of banishment. Aye! most gladly; but think of it, she is a most magnificent creature! Well, the truth is, I do believe I am a *brute*, as my mother once said." This condemnatory soliloquy was interrupted by the return of Tivvy.

"Take that seat there, right before me; now tell me, Tivvy, if you can lie as adroitly as ever?"

The girl was so astonished at being made to *sit* in the presence of her master, and so frightened by his lowering looks, that she did not really hear, see, or heed. So when Murray repeated that question, she answered, with vacant stare,

"Yes, sir."

"So I presume. Are you sure you have not improved by practice?"

"O Lors! Mas'r Charlie, I aint hurd a word you said."

"I asked you if you could lie as smartly as ever?"

"No, sir, not quite."

"Now, Tivvy, I shall ask you a few questions, and if you have a spark of truth in you, I warn you to let it out, or I will crush it out; as weak as you may think me I can still manage you."

"Oh, poor Mas'r Conrad is gwine out of his senses agin!"

She seemed to be preparing to scream out, but a menacing look from her master threw her back in her chair, and made her as mute as if she had been tongueless. For a moment the sick man looked at her cowering, frightened appearance, and bit his lip to suppress a smile; then said, in a half stern, have jocular voice:

"Well, then, I didn't mean to scare you to death quite. Tivvy, when I was ill, and you had all given me up to die—when I could not speak, and you believed I could not see—I *thought* then, girl—or I dreamed it—that I saw as plainly as I see you now, my poor, lost Marianna, standing by my bedside. She was weeping bitterly, and wringing her hands; and then, oh! then (methinks I feel them yet; so dewy and refreshing were they to my parched soul), ever and anon, she would stoop down and imprint a long, fervent kiss on my poor, dried lips. She was dressed in deep mourning, and looked so sad, so despairing. She called me dear cousin—dear Conrad—dear, dear Charlie. Then the scene changed, and she called me brother, and grew cold and reserved—seemed to shudder and shrink from me; which made me so wretched that I thought I died, and only came to life a few hours ago. Now you are to tell me every word about this, Tivvy, as you hope for any good fortune or happiness in this world or the next. I command you to tell me the truth, the whole truth. You had better not provoke me, girl."

Tivvy clasped her hands together, rolled up her eyes until you could only see the whites, and falling on her knees, says :

"Now, Mas'r Charles, I'm gwine to tell the truth, same as if I was in the judgment at the last day of the world."

"Go on," says Murray, with great trepidation, "speak."

"Well, Mas'r Charles, Conrad Murray, I takes the Lord of Hosties to witness, that what I say is the fact, the whole fact, and nothing but"—

"Go on," shouted Murray, quite carried away by impatience.

"To witness," says Tivvy, in a subdued tone, "that I does believe from the bottom and incesses of my heart and soul, that—that you w-a-s a dreaming."

With a quick movement, and an angry, disappointed look, he gave her a violent push, which threw her sprawling on the floor backward.

Just then the door opened, and Doctor Gabriel Brown entered. He stopped suddenly, exclaiming with great glee, "Hoity toity! What's all this? Ha! ha! ha! he! he! ho! ha!" and he laughed until the tears ran down his plump, ruddy cheeks. "Well, this *is* the best joke I've got on you, Conrad."

"Sir, you are mistaken; it's no joke, and I'm in no mood to be laughed at. Get up there, Tivvy, and take yourself off."

The girl rose with alacrity, and as she left, was heard to giggle. This for an instant seemed to enrage the sick man, and he commanded Brown, in a very authoritative voice, to call her back and hand him his cane.

"Pshaw! Nonsense! Why, man, you are getting well too fast. I must give you something to put you back a bit. Lie down, sir, lie down," said he as he felt his pulse.

Finding him much excited, and looking almost ill again, he proceeded to prepare a draught for him, but when he

turned to administer it, he found him sitting up in bed, looking for all the world like a galvanized corpse.

"Lie down, sir," said the doctor, in a very determined voice.

"I will not; I am a free man. How dare you speak to a white man in that way?"

"Because you are my patient. I am responsible to your friends for your well-being; besides, you are under my control, and in my power. Now, Murray, if you do not drink this anodyne and lie down quietly, like a decent sick man should do, I'll be blamed if I don't knock you down; so that's the long and short, and whole upshot of the matter."

Being very weary now, and much exhausted by the agitation of the last half-hour, he was content to fall into the hands of the good little doctor.

Presently he grew composed, and begged his friend to listen to him, while he related minutely what had passed between himself and Tivvy, imploring him to speak.

The doctor grew thoughtful, then moody, and at last answered the poor, enthusiastic, half-demented sick man: "Well, Murray, I must think, with Tivvy, that you did dream a great deal during that long slumber of the mental faculties, that midnight of the mind."

"Doctor, I did not dream then. My mind was not dark at that moment, as you think. I tell you, I saw my lost bride, my long-loved Marianna. I felt, and do yet feel, her dewy kisses on my lips. It was that heavenly moisture falling on the arid soil of my soul, which revived it, and caused verdure to spring up. You need not shake your head; I am sane now. I have not forgotten either. Would the fainting wretch who had traversed the desert for many days without refreshment, forget the cup of cool water which he had unexpectedly received? Well, as that cup would be to the parched, cracked lips of the poor perishing wayfarer in the wilderness, so was that first kiss

to my withered soul. I fainted no more. I could not die then ; but Oh ! I thirst again for that cup. Gods ! how my soul pines and my heart yearns for a few more drops even of that, th-a-t, t-h-a-t d-e-w-y cup.” He falls asleep.

Doctor Brown sat watching him for some time, with his fingers on his pulse. He smiled placidly as he slept, and still murmured, “that dewy cup.”

“Poor fellow! With all our boasted knowledge, we know nothing. We all thought him dying that night, six of us. Six doctors (I wonder it didn’t kill him) exhausted their skill, and threw up; then he was saved by one woman, and in the simplest and most natural way — a kiss! Well, I’ll be blamed if I don’t think it is enough to bring a fellow back to life. They will either kill or cure, that’s certain.”

He rang the bell, and when James entered, he told him his master must be kept very quiet. Every *person*, and every subject of an exciting nature must be kept from him.

“Yes, sir, but Miss Lindsay has been here waiting for several hours to come in; but I guess the sight o’ Miss Guttrude will not excite any great commotions in Mas’r Charles’ heart.”

The doctor smiled and left.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE GOVERNOR'S LEVEE.

"THE house was an inn, where all were feasted and welcomed."

"Hath wine an oblivious power?
Can it pluck out the sting from the brain?
The draught might beguile for an hour,
But still leave behind it the pain."

NATURE has again unveiled her bright, smiling face, and as if the more to fascinate her lovers, she has cast off her mantle of hoar frost, murky clouds, and occasional robe of beautiful snow wreaths, and arrayed herself in all her glory of light green, diversified by all the tints of the rainbow. Yet is she still a coy belle, coquetting skittishly with her adorers. Now smiling so sweetly and brightly, then veiling her face, and anon, in sheer exuberance of gladness, weeps. It is spring, the season for such vagaries—the charming month of May, about the end, and near the close of day. Light clouds are chasing each other over the soft cerulean expanse, and a balmy breeze has sprung up, cool and refreshing. The goddess herself, and all her myriad train, are breathing forth the incense of adoration to their Creator.

The flowers, at this vesper hour, are exhaling their sweetest perfumes to honor Him. The little birds, hopping from spray to spray, and chirping merrily; the choristers in the grove who open their throats and melody gushes out, do hymn forth His praise, and rejoice in their existence. Even the insect world, the poor beetle, the cricket on the hearth, and every beast and creeping thing,

in the exercise of their peculiar functions, do but furnish testimonials of the declarative glory of God. All things seem to join in this silent, harmonious tribute of praise. The earth seems one vast altar, and the universe a mighty temple, to declare the glory of its maker, and to show forth His handy-work on this sweet spring evening, this holy vesper hour. Only man, he alone, made in the image of God, is ungrateful.

A tall figure, enveloped in a shawl, moves slowly along down Market street, until he reaches a hovel. Now he takes his position against a lamp-post, and commences to scrutinize the premises. All things remain as they were. There hangs the same old blue curtain, with the rent in the center—but the season is changed, and there is no ruddy firelight gleaming through, thereby revealing what is passing within. He steps forward, and with great trepidation gives a hurried knock; another, and another succeeds the first, with even more impatience; but alas! no voice issues from within, bidding him enter.

He waits a moment longer, and finding all so still, with a disappointed look turns away and walks on to the little toy-shop and raps. An interesting lady comes to the door accompanied by a bright, happy-looking child—a pretty little girl.

“Is Miss Minny Dun at home?”

“No, sir,” answered the interesting lady. He turned mournfully off. Before Lucy May could explain a word, he is retracing his steps, but turns from the beaten track and wanders about, he cares not whither.

It is growing late, and to the valetudinarian the air feels chill and damp. As he turns his steps homeward he hears a sweet, bird-like voice call “Papa;” turning he meets his daughter, and Miss Lindsay, who is holding the little Genevieve by the hand. At the first flush he was vexed at the meeting; he believed the beauty had purposely thrown herself in the way, arrayed as she was

with such elaborate care, with all the accessories to fascinate and seduce. He was almost tempted to pass her by. But Murray was a gentleman, although now a willful, wayward one, as he was always a haughty one. He would not, nay, he could not treat any woman rudely, when from under the domination of his fierce passions.

So when the little girl ran to him, seized his hand and kissed it, saying, "Dear papa, Cousin Gerty and I walked out to seek you. Grandma sent us to see where you were, and what you were doing" (Gertrude blushed crimson); he answered, "Did you my love? I am sure I ought to be very much obliged to you both." Then he offered his arm to Gertrude, and taking the little Genevieve by the hand, they proceeded in silence.

There was a subdued manner about the girl this evening, in her tone of voice, and the expression of her face; her haughtiness seemed chastened down to something like softness. Murray almost admired her, and I imagine he gave an intimation of this by some secret telegraphing, some little pressure of the hand, or I do not know what, but the proud lady again blushed and trembled. He saw and felt this silent token of his power; and it is not in the nature of man, vain man, to be indifferent to such ovations.

They passed the Executive Mansion, whose windows were blazing with light, and there was an unwonted stir about the place.

"What is going on there, Gertrude?"

"Why Conrad! Is it possible you don't know?"

"I do not. I have seen nothing, and heard nothing, for half a century. This morning, and for the last week, I have denied myself to all visitors, pleading ill health, and bad feelings."

"The Governor is at *home* this evening, and receives his friends in any way in which they may choose to present

themselves—in masquerade, fancy-ball dress, or as yourself."

They walked on in silence for a moment; then he spoke quickly, as if afraid he would again forget it, "You are going, Gertrude?"

"Mirabile dictu!" I have no escort. This is grand reception night, and Miss Lindsay has no beau. Ah me!"

"Where is Mr. Gaines?" asked he drily, slightly smiling.

"I don't know," replied the beauty, curtly—not smiling at all.

Then came another awkward pause, in which you might have heard the lady's heart beat, had there been space under those patent corsets. Then he asked her very quickly, if she "wished to go?"

"Oh yes. More than anything in the world," said she.

"Then would you consent to lean on such a poor, broken reed as I am?"

"Thank you; with pleasure;" and the lady evidenced too much of it. It seemed like exultation; and it grated on Murray's refined and over-fastidious notions of female delicacy. It displeased him. There was in truth a manifest elation at this opportunity of being seen with him in public.

As they parted at her door, he said, "I will call for you in my carriage, at the right hour," touched his hat, and he and the little girl plodded on their way homeward.

When she reached her room, and rung for her maid, and as she was being ministered to by that sable compound of cunning, smartness, and duplicity, she continued to grumble:

"In the carriage! Aye! in the carriage! What in the fiend's name is he going to come that way for? I wanted the walk with him. I wanted every body to see me hanging on his arm."

"I'll tell you, Miss Gutty," said Ann, "I tinks I knows. nigger as I is."

"What do you mean, Miss, by speaking in my presence without license? But speak out this time, and mind how you presume again. Go on, I say."

"Well den. He's jest gwine to carry his mother; and she, you know, will come all apart—all dem patchwork will fall to pieces, ef she ebber did walk dat fur."

"Now that is it, I do expect. I don't know what he wants to hang all them scraps and shreds on his arm for? his poor, feeble arm."

"Oh, Miss Gutty! don't talk dat way; 'tis sin. She flesh of his flesh, and bone of his sinews!"

"I suppose then he will have to wait on her, hang over her, and trail round the room with her; and I shall have to promenade with Gaines, or some other stupid fellow."

"Well: Dis nigger don't know much about de *eat de cat* of dat new fashionable Gubbernor's house. I can't say for sartin. But I tell you, Miss Gutty, what I do summise, dat he won't not be able to trot round (as you say) noting, unless it be in a cheer or sofa. And Miss Gutty, if you will take the advice of your own faithful black nigger maiden, you'll just hang yourself on the tudder side, and sit still wid his mother and him; 'stead o' gallavanting about de floor. Dat will be de purtiest, and de familiarest, and more in de family-way like, to sit still wid him any how."

"Ann, I believe you are right, and I do believe I will take your advice. It will be so romantic and sentimental to immolate my ambition on the altar of affection."

"Well, Miss Gutty, I don't not know what you means by dem high-fa-lutin things and words; but I know de street door did ring some time ago."

A servant entered, handed a card, and withdrew. A few words are scratched carelessly on it with a pencil. "Mr. Gaines has called to see if Miss Lindsay has company for the evening?"

"Pshaw! I thought it might have been Conrad, or somebody. Run, Ann, and tell him I am provided."

But Ann did not confine herself to that simple message, but told him everything with which the reader is acquainted, even to the premeditated walk to entrap Murray; and detailed minutely the preceding dialogue between herself and Mistress. In fact, the lady's maid kept the lover informed from day to day, of every word and transaction in the private life of the beauty. She assured him, "That if he would only hold on '*faithful*,' that he would be sure to get her at last. I tell you, Mas'r Josiah, Col. Murray and Miss Gutty will never be married. 'Taint not his destination, and he don't want to neither; but he tries mighty hard to do it, for de honor of his sake; but he can't, because it aint not his destination."

So Gaines believed, and he never wavered in his faith a moment. He had resolved on it, and he never doubted but that he should ultimately succeed in bearing off that great prize of wealth and beauty. He had loved her at first with a pure, disinterested affection, when they were much younger. Gaines had been almost bred up in the house of his benefactor, Major Lindsay; he had known Gertrude all his life, and they were near the same age—she though being the elder.

Yes, he loved her at first for herself, without knowing that she was an heiress. But she had flirted with him, coqueted him, and sometimes lured him on to commit himself, and would then slight and maltreat him in the presence of witnesses. Still a sort of fatality kept him there: and now ambition to be the husband (he Lindsay's second clerk) of the peerless Miss Lindsay, and a secret desire to requite her treatment to him when he shall have gained that post, are the best feelings and strongest motives which actuated him. Yet he admires her intensely; he is charmed with her appearance, and enchanted by her accomplishments. Superadded to

this is a vivid recollection of that fortune of a half-million of dollars.

When Ann has concluded her communications, he smiles sardonically, and leaves the house. Murray calls at an early hour for Gertrude; informs her that it is incumbent on him to make his appearance at the mansion at rather an unseasonable hour for such an ultra fashionable as herself; that he being one of the Governor's aids, is bound to be in place.

She looks dissatisfied, and frowns involuntarily.

"I can not help it, Gertrude. You know at this time I am no part of a lady's man, and it is my duty to be at the side of the Governor. I will conduct my mother there, and send Mr. Gaines, or some other friend for you, perhaps your father."

"Oh no. I shall be ready in a moment, and much prefer going now with Aunt Murray and yourself."

She found that in the indulgence of her spleenetic feelings she had overreached herself, and that Col. Murray was not Josiah Gaines. She therefore brightens up and declares that she was only jesting, and would not detain them a second. So away she flies, and soon returns enveloped in some light mazy drapery, which throwing a softening influence about her, brings her nearer to his "beau ideal" of beauty than he has ever before thought her. She is for the first time, to *his* eyes, more lovely than handsome.

On arriving, they found the company collecting rapidly. Yet it is quite too early for the "leader of ton" to be seen. So she hurries to the cloak-room, where she meant to hide until the proper hour should arrive for her to make her advent among the admiring throng. Murray left them there. On going down he received a note from the Governor, requiring his immediate presence in the saloon.

He went back and told her that he was forced to the alternative of conducting them to the drawing-room at

once, where they would be compelled to sit; or to wait there in the dressing-room until the reception of guests should be over. This would have been crucifixion to the vanity of the spoiled girl. To be seated for an hour or two when she first enters a drawing room! Why she would get a back-set from which she could not recover during the whole evening. Therefore she proposed that he should hand his mother to a seat, and at his earliest convenience return for her.

Thus Murray and his mother were the first to pay their devoirs to the "powers that be." Then seating her on a sofa in the most desirable part of the room, he brought a friend of his—a distinguished stranger—and introduced him to her. After which he took his station by the side of the Governor.

It was hard to tell, as they stood there together, which created the greatest sensation; the fair, ruddy, light-haired, merry-faced, medium-sized man in office, or the pale, dark, and grandly melancholy countenance and manly form of his aid. Perhaps place and position threw a few straws in the balance against our friend Murray, in the minds of the mothers and more calculating daughters; but with the natural, sentimental, and disinterested, our somber friend made him kick the beam.

As soon as his duties, as the Governor's right hand man, were over, he excused himself, and left for the purpose of conducting the peerless Gertrude through the rooms. On his way, he encounters Mr. Gaines, who is wearing a mock rueful face, but with a lurking smile in the corner of his rather pretty mouth. On inquiring the cause, Gaines says:

"The one thousand and one rebuffs which I have met with, at different times from Miss Lindsay, are all nothing to the one I have just received. I went, as I thought, in duty bound—being of the same household—to offer my arm to the lady, my old play-mate, when she rejected it

with scorn. She absolutely spurned me as I imagine a Sultana would a presumptuous slave. She declared she would sit there till broad daylight, if you did not choose to come for her until that time."

"And yet you laugh, Mr. Gaines. I regret this scene, but I declare you evidence so much philosophy, or it may be apathy under it, that I am filled with admiration. Which of these is in full exercise now, Josiah?"

"Neither, sir; I only let patience have her perfect work. It will not always be so, and you will see it," and he smiled significantly, and passed on.

Gertrude surpassed herself in elegance to-night. Of late, in her absorbing desire to please her lover, she had dressed more in accordance with his taste, which was less magnificent, but more chaste than her own. On this evening she wore white crepelise, thickly dotted over with minute gold stars. A border of jasmine and other beautiful flowers, were wrought in gold around the skirt, as high as the knees. This was worn over white satin. A snowy gossamer veil, ornamented as the dress, hung in graceful folds depending from the back of her head. This veil was made from the finest blond lace, and so mazy that you would almost doubt of its existence, had it not been wrought with gold thread into a wreath at the border, and specked all over with the smallest spangles. The usual tiara of diamonds or pearls, each worth a sugar plantation, was displaced by a simple wreath of orange blossoms—this confined the veil. Her appearance, altogether, was more feminine, and much more in character with her age and girlhood than he had ever seen it.

As soon as they had advanced a little way into the first parlor, he found that they were attracting the undivided attention of the gaping, admiring multitude; and remembering that Gertrude had not yet received the obeisance of the presiding genius of this tumultuous sea of human

beings, he endeavored to lead her to him—but more to avoid the rude stare, and servile bows which were offered to the belle.

In elbowing their way through the crowd, Gertrude was once or twice in imminent danger of losing her veil, and Murray his equilibrium as well as equanimity. Many an amusing sight and shocking sound greets them. But what matters? This is a Republican Government, and that was a sort of "*omnium gatherum*," where all could come and feel free. Here is Apple Joe, as the children call the street vender of that fruit, and by his side is his little dowdy *sweetheart*—so finely dressed that she ignores all acquaintance with the laundry that morning. Anon, they are jostled by the burly blacksmith, who, at twelve o'clock to-day, came out with naked arms, sooty face, leatheren apron, and hammer in hand, to examine a loose shoe on the foot of one of the noble greys before the regal equipage of the proud lady. Now he pulls his front lock with a clownish bow, to the polished aristocrat. There, too, is Mr. Nathan, the Jew clothing merchant, gliding about amid the throng. Here are masks, and dominos, and fancy dresses, and citizens' dresses. The badges of office, the insignia of pride of place, pride of wealth, and pride of family, mingling and jostling, cheek by jowl, with the artizan and tradesman. There stands the gaping, staring, wondering delegation from the country. The peasant is easily told from the city hireling. All meet here on equal grounds once a year, "pell mell, in the people's house—the Executive mansion."

They now force their way to the ballroom; and there, flashing in diamonds and *charms*, amid that unmitigated gaslight, they find the "*soi disant*" elite of the city. We can not stop here to describe, at any length, what meets the senses there. For one second, all is suspended * and merged into that admiring gaze at the handsome couple who now advance into the center of the room.

Then the beaux and acquaintances (but not friends ; of such she is minus. Poor lady ! Any sort of superiority, any very great endowments, either of wealth, genius, or beauty, separates a woman from her species—especially from her own sex, and leaves her really isolated and *friendless*) — of Miss Lindsay flock to, and crowd around her with that stereotyped smile, and everlasting, unchanging, monotonous phrase — “ May I have the pleasure to dance the next set with you ? ” She declines all overtures, preferring to hang on the arm of that “ *broken reed*, ” and with him, to view and criticise the motley scene.

Here is a lady who has some time since fallen into the “ sere and yellow leaf,” trying to blush under the similitude of spring. Another who has not passed her first, fresh girlhood, is bending under the voluptuous maturity of summer. Anon a child, fair, fresh, and ruddy, is personifying winter, and is dressed in crimson velvet and gold fringes ; she is literally bowed down with ermine and the heat. It is not exactly a “ midsummer night,” but it is a balmy evening in May. This is a called session of the Legislature, and out of season, and out of order, as many other things are also.

Here are kings and queens, lords and ladies, counts and countesses. On the right stands Madame de Maintenon, leaning on the arm of her royal lover. On the left is Richlieu, seeming to be engaged in watching the soft dalliance of the distinguished couple. Here is Queen Elizabeth, with ruff and farthingale, dancing the latest French cotillion with her favorite Leicester. By her side, whispering and giggling in the last and most approved style known in the court of folly, is her beautiful rival, the Queen o’ Scots. Then there are May Dacres, and sweet Lucy Ashtons, and Die Vernons ; but the young “ Nourmahal, the light of the harem,” does not join in the giddy whirl

to-night, but stands apart with a look of quiescent contentedness never before seen on that countenance under similar circumstances.

"Conrad," murmured she, looking lovingly into his face, "I will not keep you standing; you are feeble, and must feel weary. Let us join your mother at once."

He did not reply, and she found he was watching a couple who were standing back in an alcove window, looking on at the dancers.

"Who is that distinguished-looking man there, so darkly and superbly handsome? he who is bending over and talking so earnestly to that mask? See how gracefully and trustingly she hangs on his arm — his stout, strong arm."

"Yes," said Murray, "'tis the ivy and the oak, the vine clinging to the brave, tall tree." He had not removed his eyes while speaking, but kept them fixed on the masked figure.

"Who are they? See, they emerge from their hiding-places. Why, Conrad, he is the handsomest man in the room, except yourself. I think him the most perfect impersonation of Cœur-de-lion. Do you think he meant to revive the 'Black Knight' here this evening, Charles?"

"No: I do not presume he ever thought of it; but had King Richard's spirit sought the world, though, he could not have found a more worthy representative, not only seemingly but really."

"You know him, then? Pray enlighten me; I'm captivated."

"No, not much; very slightly acquainted with the person, but well aware of the great worth of the man."

They passed on to the drawing-room, and approached the Governor.

"Ah! my queen of beauty! my Venus de Medicis! my constellation has been incomplete all the evening. And

now all lesser lights pale in the presence of this star. See, see, how they hide their diminished heads already. Ha! ha! ha! look, Conrad. Ah! you are a lucky dog."

This last remark and burst of merriment was evoked from the little Governor, who really did feel very great admiration for the personal appearance of Gertrude, by the dropping off of the gay bevy of ladies who had continued to revolve around him the whole night, until his hyperbolical simile, expressing his sense of her superiority, had given offense. He had managed to make each one think herself the prime favorite; thereby keeping quite a number near him to aid in the tiresome conventionalities imposed on him by his high position. But now they are scattered to the four corners of the room, or elsewhere, and that brilliant trio are left standing alone.

The Governor then proposes that they shall adjourn to the ball-room; but Gertrude excuses herself, and intimates that she would like to join Mrs. Murray.

They find her still in conversation with that distinguished stranger. The gentleman rises and offers his seat, but Gertrude passes on, knowing by experience that one lady never forgives another who is so unfortunate, or imprudent, as to supplant an agreeable gentleman by her side. Mr. and Mrs. Green are sitting there, but sweet Mary Green is treading that everlasting round with her blond lover.

Murray threw himself down by Gertrude, and complained of great weariness. The lady was full of sympathy and regret, and invoked all sorts of genteel little imprecations on herself for imposing on him such a task.

"Well, never mind now, you can not help it; they will make such a lioness of you. This evening you have enjoyed an unprecedented triumph, and now we can afford to sit still and watch the progress of the treadmill."

"Yes, my love," whispered she, and then blushed at

her own temerity. So she commenced her criticisms in a hurried and embarrassed voice.

"Mrs. Calderwood, as I live. Why, yesterday she pronounced herself ill in bed. Look, Conrad, how she is trying to give old Miss Nancy Jones the slip. See how the poor old toady hangs on."

As she came near, they could hear her voice in a loud, hissing whisper: "Yes, Mis Callerwood, they are here. I saw 'em in the ball-room jest now, as I peeped in. She was dressed beautiful, and looked mons'rous pretty. I declare he looked down in her face, like he was beginning to love her. His mother is here too, and got on all her *fixings*, and looks ra-al elegant."

Mr. Calderwood was dragging his wife along at a rapid pace, as if to get through with an irksome duty, as well as to shake off her usual appurtenance, Miss Nancy Jones. She had no intention of extending the least civility in public to the poor old creature, or in fact of being seen with her; but her anxiety to know all about certain persons whom she hated because she envied them, and the eager delight with which she gave her attention to what "*they do say*," was stronger even than pride. So as they walk along, her head is thrown back in the attitude of listening.

Calderwood gives her a sudden jerk, with, "What in the devil's name are you dragging back so for?" And thus he separated her from the crone. He has just perceived Gertrude, and is all anxiety to throw himself in her train. Now they stop, and Calderwood is transfixed before the beauty and the belle.

Murray most cordially despised this married roué, and moved off, that he might not be forced to listen to the fulsome adulation which he knew would be poured into the willing ear of his affianced bride.

So Calderwood and his wife dropped down on each side

of Gertrude; the former commencing a whispered conversation. Thus Miss Nancy was shuffled off with as little compunction as they would have thrown away a worthless garment.

"Poor old thing!" said Mrs. Green, "I am truly sorry for her." She made room between herself and Mrs. Murray, and invited her to sit.

Murray noted this good action, and it penetrated him. He therefore rose, and remained standing, in order to give them more space.

That perpetual round of promenaders is now for the first time broken, and the large room is greatly thinned. The "elephant" has gotten through with the exhibition of himself, and has stolen off to regale. The lesser members of the jungle follow the example of the master beast of the managerie.

"Who is that pretty, interesting girl with Doctor Brown?" said Murray to Mrs. Green. "Surely, I have seen her before."

"That is Mrs. Brown. The doctor is married, you know."

"Married? When? Why, I never heard a word of it." A laugh a little too loud and boisterous for the "queen of beauty," burst from Gertrude, which seems to startle and shock Murray.

"She never does anything right when in company with that wretch," said he to Mrs. Green. The lady smiled and shook her head.

"Why, Col. Murray, you are the veriest old 'Rip Van Winkle.' Have you also been asleep twenty years?" said Gertrude.

This thoughtless remark elicited a laugh from a portion of the circle, but it passed without further notice.

Murray was occupied in watching the little doctor, whose good-natured face was glowing with happiness. Minny was dressed in a delicate rose-colored gros-de-

Naples, made "low-necked and short sleeves." She also wore costly lace and handsome rubies, which were peculiarly becoming to her rich brown skin. There were no ornaments in her hair, save one "red, red rose." She is greatly improved in appearance, having become *fat* and *plump*; her complexion, too, is clear. In short, she is now a very pretty little woman, and is the embodiment of cheerfulness, amiability, and contentment.

"Whom did he marry?" asked Murray.

"A Miss Dun; an exceedingly interesting Scotch girl," replied Mrs. Green.

"Do you visit her, madam?" again inquired he.

"Oh yes, and like her; she is as estimable as she is pleasing."

"Do you visit my friend Brown's family, mother?"

"No, Conrad, I can't of course visit one of her low origin; but I assure you, my dear, I shall always feel grateful to her, and would be willing to do her a service at any time. I tell you, madam," turning to Mrs. Green, "her attention to my son during his illness was unremitting. She came with her husband, night after night, and performed miracles in the way of watching by his bedside."

Just then they passed, seeming to be as much interested in each other as if they had not been *married*, or were still lovers. The doctor bowed, and Minny smiled brightly and ingenuously.

"There is no consciousness of inferiority in that sweet, satisfied smile, and composed countenance, at least," said Murray.

"She feels none, and there is none. She is equal, and even superior, in many things, to the best of us," said Mrs. Green.

"Where did my friend Gabriel find her?"

"Well, now," struck in Miss Nancy, unable to contain longer, "they do say that she has seen better days, away over on the Black Sea, in Scotland, where they say she

come from ; but for several years here she has kept that little old toy-shop away down Market street, in that low, mean neighborhood close by "—

"Oh well, Jones, hush ; you never know where to stop when you get started. The woman couldn't help what you say of her ; she was, you know, deadly poor. All I ever had against her was, that she would always keep up such an intimacy with that insolent milliner ; she with that hateful, pretty, smirking face of hers."

A loud "ha! ha! ha!" from Calderwood, was the only response to this amiable speech of his wife.

Murray jumped up angrily and left them, and advancing toward the inoffensive subject of this rude philippic, he joins them, and shakes hands cordially with Brown, who introduces his wife, seeming to swell with pride as he calls the dear little Minny by his name. After a short promenade together, they return and take their seats opposite to the party on the sofa. They talk of the doctor's marriage, of Murray's illness, etc. Minny converses with ease and fluency ; very sweetly interlarding her phrases with her pretty Scotch words. But she has lost some of them, which "dear Gabe" has found, such is the reciprocity in all things between them.

Murray adverts to the evening he met her at the theater ; for as soon as he heard her speak, he had recognized her to be the same sweet little creature who had so charmed him with her simplicity and innocent self-possession. But when he ingeniously, as he thought, led to the subject of the veiled lady, and essayed to gain some information of her, his friends became suddenly silent and embarrassed ; and now the whole scene from first to last dawns on his awakening memory, and he urges them in the most impassioned voice to enlighten him.

"I can na tell ye, sir. I have nae right to speak o' that puir lady's sad history. I am bound by an oath not to do sae."

"For heaven's sake, my friend ! compassionate my condition, and tell me, if no more, whether she escaped, and how."

"Well," replied the Doctor, between a sigh and a growl, for the little man found his kind heart was prompting him to do a thing which his reason condemned, and his pledged word forbade ; "well then, she was rescued alive, by that noble beast, the lion of his tribe, or 'big black bear,' as he looked then—Murdoch, the Night Watch."

"God bless him!" cried Murray. "May a just Power so rescue him from all trouble! And there he is now, with that slight graceful mask, again." They were talking earnestly, in a low voice. "By heavens! I'll go and thank him. Who is that with him?"

"Aweel; I dinna ken, seeing her face is covered over with that pasteboard thing."

"True, I had forgotten ; how could you know?"

He starts off, overtakes them, shakes hands with Murdoch, expresses his pleasure at the meeting, and bows respectfully to the mask. Murdoch, in an embarrassed and little bit clownish way, congratulates him on his recovery; then a dead pause ensues, as they pass on and leave the room.

"Oh ! there is that glorious Black Knight again. I really envy the mask on his arm. How proud I should be to have such a sublime 'personification of *night*' to do battle for me, and be subject to my behest!"

A universal burst of merriment succeeded ; several of the party exclaiming in astonishment, "Why, Miss Lindsay, you are crazy."

"Who is he then ?" two or three, or more voices call out at once.

"Why, it is only Murdoch, the Night Watch, dressed up."

"I don't believe it," said she.

"It is true, though, my *dear*," whispered the roué in her ear. "And now talk to *me*, my sweet girl. We have not many moments allotted to us, like the present, of late. Why is this, my love?" said he, squeezing her hand.

The lady returns the pressure, but intimates by some secret sign, that his wife is on the *qui vive*.

The spell is broken, and the aristocratic beauty no longer sees Richard Cœur-de-lion, in the huge form passing before her, but remembers that he is awkward as well as athletic; his shoulders are too broad and brawny, and his moustache and whiskers altogether too black and bushy. Moreover, she had thought all the time that he did carry himself like a plebeian, and a very Night Watch—that even there, in the Governor's drawing-room, he still retained the sort of stride and swing belonging to his office. Poor Richard Cœur-de-lion! Thou art most suddenly unhorsed. Most ruthlessly robbed of thy helmet, shield, and buckler!

When Murray returned he found the room vacated. A servant steps up and tells him that the Governor wished to see him in the first supper room.

"Lead on," said Murray. When he entered the room he saw the same *elite* standing around the table; the Governor and Miss Lindsay presiding at the head. He receives a sign from them to join the brilliant circle, of whom Gertrude is the nucleus.

Toast after toast is drunk; sentiment after sentiment given; tribute after tribute offered up at that shrine, where he only never had bowed, or bent the knee in true homage. He gazes at the sparkling creature, then hanging on the Governor's arm. At last, but slowly the conviction is forced on him, that he is perhaps untrue to himself in thus secretly worshiping an idol which has long since been dragged from its pedestal, the image only of which is now hid away in his own heart. Was it not

wrong, to fling away such a prize, to toy with the happiness of another, and maybe at last immolate the peace and welfare of both to a shade. "Alas! I am very willful and wayward. Should I not be proud of an alliance with this woman, whom everybody admires? Should I not feel gratified by the marked preference she shows me every where? But is not her love at all times, in public as well as in private, too demonstrative? Oh yes, I am oftentimes shocked."

"Come, Colonel," calls out the Governor, "you are a recreant knight, I fear. You have not yet proposed a toast to your ladye—friend here. Shall I suggest one for you?"

Murray bowed. The little great man drew himself up and throwing back his head, gave, "The Queen of Beauty; The Light of the World; The Young Nourmahal." The intoxicating cup was quaffed with enthusiasm, and the Siren smiled complacently and encouragingly on this libation. Another and another glass of the sparkling juice is poured out on that altar, and still the Circe allures and fascinates. At last the calm, dignified, self-possessed Murray, the cool, unimpassioned lover, the candid, honorable, upright gentleman, drinks deep and madly—for the first time in his life, abandons himself to his whirlwind passions.

They are about to adjourn. The Governor, who is much more than "half-seas over," offers his arm again to Gertrude; but Murray, with a smile and bow, which would have done honor to George the Fourth, says, "Excuse me, Governor, I am opposed to a monopoly, even in office," and leads off the "Light of the World."

He carries her to a private balcony, and then the heretofore indifferent lover breathes into the eager ear of the infatuated girl, for the first time in his life, something like passion. He does not tell her he loves her; his lips refuse to utter this untruth; but he makes her, in some

wild, incoherent way, comprehend that he is dazzled and bewildered by her charms ; that he is intoxicated with the idea of possessing this pet of society ; in short, that he is consumed with passion for her. He begs her to appoint another day — an early day — for their marriage.

When she, with well-feigned chariness, tells him to compose himself, and speaks of a month — then remembers that that is a very short time to make all suitable arrangements, he calls to mind how infirm of purpose he has always been on that one subject ; feels that he must not again subject his feelings to the alembic of time, that he must act promptly, if at all, and therefore says, with energy,

“ Come, Gertrude, let it take place now, at once ; no more postponements, an you love me.” Then she accedes with a charming modesty, which quite takes him. He strains her to his breast in a long and passionate embrace.

O divine spirit of “pure love!” surely thou hast folded thy wings, and in thy stead some demon doth possess this poor mortal, who from childhood till now has ever been the soul of honor ! O Spirit of Wine ! What hast thou done ? This mighty sin shall be laid at thy door. See ! thou hast superseded all the gentler and finer emotions of his soul.

On stepping from the open window back into the room, Murray thought he saw a dark figure glide from under the curtain, and move swiftly away. But what matter, he sees double now.

Gertrude has rejoined her party, and Murray rushes off somewhere to breathe the fresh air. He cares not where he finds it ; but he has need of it to cool his fevered brain.

He has very much the feeling of one who has been impelled by some unseen, indefinable influence to sign his own death-warrant. Now he bares his breast to the breeze ; he feels frantic ; he does not know whether joy

or anger is the dominant feeling; but he knows that he is almost *mad*.

Many persons are promenading that spacious piazza; but he heeds them not. There he stands with open bosom inviting the winds and the storms, if they would come. The front of the executive mansion in the city of _____ is ornamented with majestic Corinthian columns; as he passes by one of these pillars a mask darts from behind it, and puts a note into his hand, then in the twinkling of an eye is gone. He examines the pillar; there is scarce a foothold for a bird behind it. He turns into the house, and by the first light in the hall reads:—

“ COL. MURRAY—Beware how thou dost bind thyself by bonds which will chafe thee unto the end of thy life. Suffer no fetters to be riveted, save those which have been forged by affection. A true friend advises thee. She whom thou hast loved fondly from thy boyhood yet *lives*, and *loves* thee, even as much as thou dost love her. *Remember, and beware of ties.*”

With a still wilder start, and more bewildered look, he is about to leave the house, with head uncovered, and cloakless.

“ How now, Conrad? Is your head so weak, that you can not drink the health of your friends, and pledge them in a cup each to his own Divinity? Come, you have been derelict ere now, and we have forgiven you; but our clemency is not like the widow’s cruise. This way!” and he leads to the dining-room, where a knot of good fellows are standing before the sideboard. They separate for the Governor and his aid: then they all join in congratulations on the approaching nuptials; this calls for bumpers, and they jest and laugh with the most obstreperous merriment. At a moment when Murray is speaking to

Gaines, who is one of the Governor's clique, the latter steps off, and then they drink once more.

Presently Col. Murray seeks his party. He finds Gertrude and the Governor engaged in a low, earnest conversation: he seems to be charging her with something which she is denying. On perceiving him, they both become confused. The Governor rallies, and with a smile in which a slight shade of sarcasm is visible, says—"Well, we'll see; we'll see!"

He then leads her to Murray—"Sir, Miss Lindsay grows languid. Our poor efforts to please pall on her over-fastidious taste. She complains of satiety;" then bows, and leaves.

"There is something covert in that speech," said Murray, mentally; and he grew a little bit jealous. It is said that "Love sat to the artist when jealousy was painted." Our friend Murray is somewhat entangled with both. He says, "I will ask Gertrude what it all means? Pshaw! why should I? I shall not be the wiser if I do. From henceforth, I must make myself half blind, and just as deaf;" and a keen pang shot through his heart.

Now the multitude is dispersing, he hands his mother and Gertrude into the carriage, and jumps in after them. They are whirled home. On taking leave of the beauty, with a feeling of desperation he clasps her again madly to his bosom. Some spirit—whether good or bad, we know not which—whispered, "Think of thy lost bride; think of poor Marianna." And he remembers then the mysterious note: thinks he will peruse it more particularly when he reaches home. Ere he gets there, his memory and mind are both overshadowed; he throws himself heavily on the bed, and sinks into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MASQUE.

“AH! could you look into my heart,
And find your image there;
You would own the sunny loveliness
Affection makes it wear.”

“The beautiful are never desolate, for some one always loves them.”

“BUT, Leah, I don’t see why you should care so much, and be always troubling yourself about people whom you do not know, and who care not for you. Is it that you are in love, too, with that handsome fellow yonder, with all them gauds and glittering rags hanging on his arm? D—— him! he has crossed my path before, and I would hate him if I could.”

“But thou canst not, Murdoch; all who know Colonel Murray must respect and honor him, if not love him.”

The man turns fiercely on her, scowls, and, dropping her little hand, folds his arms.

“Leah, you had better stop there! If you desire any good to come to that haughty man, you had best say no more: for by your own fathers Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the rest of ‘em, I’ll put this into him (touching a large clasp-knife), with as little remorse as I killed that rabid dog yesterday. That is, if I find him stealing *you* away from me also.”

“Dear Murdoch, I do not know the man — never have been nearer to him than at this moment, until he joined us so cordially to-night. But let me tell thee now, once for all, that it is not Col. Murray, but the lady. I know

that it is only through him, that her happiness can be secured. Then why shouldst thou threaten thus? Thou dost not love me now, Murdoch." The girl spoke this in a subdued, heartbroken tone.

"Did I love your mother, girl? Did I worship her while on earth? and do I adore her image, now that she's in heaven?"

"I think thou dost, good Murdoch."

"Then know that you are like her—a *fac simile* of her."

Her face lights up with joy as she raises her timid eyes to his. "Dear friend! dear foster brother! but do not talk so sharply. You awe me."

He presses her hand as he looks down in her face affectionately.

"Go on, Leah, go on, dear girl. I'll do my best to keep down the beast, and conceal the Night Watch under the garb of the Governor's guest and thy lover. Now, go on, Leah. What were you saying? Your voice is very soothing and sweet to my ears."

"I don't know, now; excessive happiness, as well as intense wretchedness, makes us stupid. I can think of nothing but thyself, when near thee, my dear brother." She raised her little hand to her head, and seemed to be trying to recall some vagrant thought. Then she looked up brightly and said:

"Ah! I have seen this sweet lady; have talked to her; have looked into that touchingly beautiful face; gazed into those deep, deep melancholy eyes; have received kind and courteous treatment from her. Oh! she is divinely beautiful! I would not have blamed thee for adoring her—for falling down and worshiping her like a canonized saint, or an enshrined image, as *thy* religion teaches; but surely thou didst dream, madly dream, Murdoch, when thou didst think of mating with that proud, high-born Christian."

"How do you know that she is high-born, Leah?"

"Ah! how could I fail to know? Nobility of soul is written on her countenance, proclaimed by her gentle manners, and in her sweet voice; it is labeled on every act of her faultless life. Yet is she proud, she would not even listen to thy love. Poor, dear Murdoch!"

"Blame me not, girl, but blame yourself. This would never have happened to me had your mother lived; for then you would not have kept from me the light of your own sweet face, thus consigning me to darkness. Leah, you do not feel for me, and hide my faults, and excuse my failings as your mother did. She knew of my weaknesses and pitied me. She knew—but maybe you do not yet know (and that strong man trembled) that beauty—the beautiful form and face of woman, has a maddening influence on me. It creates a sort of delirious joy, an insane desire for possession, an exquisite pain, a"—

"Alas! poor Murdoch!" said Leah, interrupting him, "I have heard my mother say so, good friend, but as yet I have found thee very clever and docile. Thou shouldst be the Sultan, Murdoch. Wouldst like to be a Grand Turk, brother?"

"No, girl, I spoke truly when I said you did not know me. I have never loved but twice before," pressing her hand, "and then only one at a time."

"Dost admire that radiant creature yonder, hanging so lovingly on the arm of Col. Murray?"

"No, child; no indeed; I never liked a full-blown rose, or a gaudy tulip, or dahlia, which spreads out its gay beauties to meet the kisses of every sunbeam, or to invite every idle breeze, as you know. But, Leah, I have ever sought out the modest and lowly wild flowers. I should never have raised my eyes to that divine creature, had she been exalted, and above all, had there not been something mysterious about her, something which I could not comprehend; and this feeling was the offspring of com-

passion, and a desire to protect and cherish. But she spurned me ; Oh, she spurned me for him ! D—— him ! would that I could hate them both."

" Hush ! hush ! Thou art mistaken, sir ; " said the girl, in a calm, dignified voice, " thou dost wander far from the mark, when thou blamest that man. He did not supplant thee. Long before that poor lady came to this city, they were attached, engaged, and separated. He loved as even thou thyself knowest how to love, dear Murdoch. Then be not too hard ; thou art like him in many things, good friend. By the most cruel train of circumstances they were torn asunder. My father was the prime minister in the atrocity, and the directing and controlling power was that shrewd but bad woman, Mrs. Murray. Even now she holds a despotic sway over him, for which I can not account."

" Leah, how do you know all this ? By heavens ! if you can prove this to me, I will take a vow, a solemn oath, that I will not look upon your sweet face, or embrace you, until I have restored them to each other. But you must make it clear to me, girl, without shadow of doubt, and I'll bind myself to do your bidding in all things. Then, when *they* are happy, I shall claim my reward," and the strong, brawny arm of the Night Watch encircled her waist, and strained to his breast that delicate, refined girl.

" Let it be as thou sayest," sighed she, with intense happiness. " And now listen to me. My dear mother, ere she died, when entrusting her poor child with many another fearful secret, leaving many injunctions and innumerable directions, told me also of this — detailed to me minutely all the events which transpired some seven or eight years ago, in the city of —, where she and my father, and all the other members of the plot then lived. She made me promise, and she called on all the patriarchs to witness it, that I would be vigilant, and always ready

at a moment's warning, to aid and succor that poor lady, should I ever find her out. At the same time said that facts had become so mystified, and it was now such a tangled web, that she feared I would never be able to straighten it ; confessed with tears, that *she* had signally failed, but urged me to put forth all the energy and power of my soul, which is brave and strong in obeying the behests of that sainted mother. Then she pointed to thee, Murdoch, as a fit coadjutor in this work of mercy. She did not see, she scarce hoped, that we could restore the lovers, but she believed we might save the poor lady some anguish, and my misguided father the stain of another crime on his benighted soul. Then she told me, and oh ! so mournfully, Murdoch, that I should find my reward in a peaceful conscience here—all she had ever known—and a full recompense in heaven." The girl wept.

" Ah ! do not weep, darling. This is no place for tears. We are at the Governor's reception ball, my good Leah."

" I care not, Murdoch ; I have no heart for such light pleasures ; mine is a higher mission. I rarely have time to smile, even. See, there is my father now, with his stealthy step, creeping along the wall, intent on some evil purpose. O that God would gather me to my people, or that I might become apathetic, blind, deaf."

" Well, Leah, what do you propose ? I am your tool, until this work of retribution is accomplished. Command me, girl, as your own."

" God bless thee, Murdoch ! but I must first premise two conditions."

" Well, I am ready," said he, drawing her nearer.

" First, thou art not to endanger thy own precious life ; then thou must save my father. Murdoch," said she, seizing his hand with both of hers, " that old, white-haired man must not be sent into the presence of his God with a

fresh crime, an unrepented sin on his head. Promise me this, friend."

"Lord, Leah, what's the use? He'll never be any better. He sold the immortal part of himself long ago to Satan, for what's in that old trunk, you know, child. I sometimes think I can see the imps or young devils, hovering around him, waiting for the old carcass."

The girl looks hurt, and very much troubled, as she replies: "I know thy vocation, thy dark life; I mean thy life in the dark, has made thy vision very acute about dark things, and thou mayest have so much to do with the Evil One thyself, that the members of his family are not afraid to show themselves in thy presence. I have never seen such company about my poor father. Methinks thou art quick-sighted, sir. But this is thy own lookout, good Murdoch. Art thou free from sin?" said she, with much spirit.

"From crime, as God above knows, and my little wife, that is soon to be, believes. Come now Leah, you must forgive me. I love you so much, and I have identified myself with you so fully, that I felt free to speak as I did of *our* father. You will pardon me, loved one."

"I do, Murdoch; but we waste time."

"What do you propose then, I again ask?"

"There is," said the girl, heaving a deep sigh, "a dreadful plot forming; a frightful scheme hatching. I have watched its progress for some time. Old Faggot, the Jew miser—not my father Levi Nathan, mind you—is engaged by two wealthy ladies at a high price to kidnap or kill that poor defenseless lady."

Murdoch starts violently, and in his agitation lets Leah's arm drop.

"My God! you don't tell me so. Are they at that game again?"

"It is even so. They think she, the unfortunate Mrs.

Wise, whom they all now identify with his lost Marianna, stands in the way of the consummation of the marriage of Col. Murray and the wealthy Miss Lindsay. *He* only seems to be kept in ignorance of her existence. This marriage has already been interrupted twice, and these evil-minded persons attribute this delay to her; when she, poor woman, is wholly unconscious of the existence of such facts."

"Leah, you surprise me; but how could this be?"

"In the first place, they would have been married a year ago, about the time the lady is first seen in the city. It seems he got an accidental sight of her at the window, and being struck with the wonderful resemblance to one whom he had thought dead, he immediately conceived the romantic idea that she was one and the same person; and so he was not forthcoming in due season."

"Oh yes! I know. It was the same time that I saw her, and was so dazzled and grew so distracted," chimed in Murdoch. "I do remember the very first time he got a glimpse of her at the old window, 'he jumped almost out of his hide,' as Johnson says, 'with amazement.' But Leah, I thought it was on account of her pretty face, and I tried to hate him from that time."

"After that, the old Hecate his mother, and the Circean beauty, who is now looking so sweetly and *innocently* up into his face, cajoled him into another engagement, which was again interrupted by the events of that disastrous night, when Col. Murray was wounded."

"Yes, d—— him! I can never forget that night; or the mighty fall he occasioned me. D—— him! I wish I could hate him."

"Hush, Murdoch, thou dost shock me. Is it thus thou shouldst treat the child of thy best friend? Why dost thou continually offend mine ears by such coarse profanity?"

"Once more I beg you to forgive me, Leah. Go on. I will not offend again, unless I forget myself, or am surprised."

"Now," resumed the girl, "they have put their wits together to inveigle him into another promise, well knowing that he will fulfill it with his life, if not prevented by omnipotent power. That man would not break his plighted faith even to that woman by his side, all heartless as he knows her to be."

"She loves him with an entire heart, Leah; you can see that; then how can she be heartless?"

"Well; her *passion* for him is all that redeems her from it."

"Leah, I will just ask you one question, and then indeed I'll hear you to the end: How do you find out all these deep, dark secrets?"

The maiden blushed with shame at the recollection of the ignoble post she occupied in her father's house—her pure nature recoiled at the name of "spy." She spoke quickly, and in a curt, cold voice: "Why ask me that, sir? I thought that thou didst know, that old Faggot, the Jew peddler, miser, usurer, and villain, had a spy planted in every house in the city, where his interest or his malice is at stake; and that his wretched, degraded daughter had a crack in the wall, and quick ears, and sharp eyes? I thought thou didst understand all this, and the whys and wherefores? Now, Murdoch, I have thy promise to aid me in this good work. Have I?"

"Yes; I will obey you in all things, doing my best to succeed. Then, even if I fail, having satisfied you with my efforts, shall I then claim my reward, and receive my recompense?"

"Oh yes, dear Murdoch."

"Thank you! thank you, Leah." And it was then that they emerged from the alcove window.

Later in the evening we saw Murray join them. Still

later, we see Leah gliding away from the window of the balcony. Lastly, we meet her on the piazza, after she has darted from the column. Having now accomplished her mission — that which brought her there — she and her lover return to her home, where peace, comfort, and a refreshing banquet await them.

Levi Nathan had not intended that his daughter should leave home that night; he thought he had shut her in, as once before. Therefore, he did not suspect that the tall, graceful girl on Murdoch's arm, was his own daughter. He had met this couple once or twice, and had passed with a cringing bow. Having been informed by the little black slave, that Mrs. Wise would accompany Doctor Brown and Minny to the Governor's levee "*en masque*," he had agreed, for an enormous sum, exceeding even the former stipulation, to abduct her; and with this fiendish intent, he and his emissaries had repaired to the mansion.

It is true, Myra had been coaxed into giving her consent, and would have suffered herself to be taken, had not the little Clarencee come home that evening sick. And thus again was she saved from falling into the clutches of these vultures. Leah had stolen forth, through one of the secret passages, and met her lover on the confines of that old, gloomy court.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FORGERIES.

"Thought ye your iron hands of pride,
Could break the knot that love had tied?"

"Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accursed, and in a cursed hour she hies."

COL. MURRAY awoke after his revel, with an aching head and heavy heart. He rings for his servant, and orders a bath, after which he dresses himself with great care—intending to call on Miss Lindsay agreeable to appointment—to hear the day, that day of days, named.

James picked up a paper, and, handing it to his master, says: "You jes drap that, sir." He opens it, and as he reads, becomes red and white by turns; then starting up, walks hurriedly across the room.

"James, do you remember that hovel, away down Market street, where that beautiful boy lived?"

"Yes, sir; and a lady lives there much more beautifuler than the boy."

Murray blushed involuntarily as he said: "Silence, sir! I asked you but one question."

James clasped his hands low down over his stomach, and commenced twirling his thumbs, trying to look like "suffering innocence, just ready to be offered."

"Where are they, then? I think they have left their former residence," rejoined Murray, turning away as he spoke.

"Well, I don't know ezactly; but I know they's still in the city."

"Are you sure, James?"

"Oh, yes, sir; I'm quite sure of that circumstance—'cause the pretty child you was a speaking about, is still at the old theater, a playing to crowded and admiring hou"—

"Will you keep silence, sir, and only reply as you are questioned? What is this boy's name?—I mean the name of his family?"

"I've heard Tivvy say, sir, that her name was Mrs. Wise."

"Very well; now go and ask Tivvy what her Christian name is. Then answer to the bell, and be ready to carry letters to the post-office."

When James got alone with Tivvy, she, artful creature as she was, drew him on ingeniously to speak of his master's affairs, and although he was a faithful servant as negroes go, and attached to his master, he was nothing in the hands of such an intriguante as the lady's maid. So she made him tell her everything that passed; and when he had done so, he was scarcely aware of it, so adroitly had she wormed these secrets from the poor fellow, who would gladly have been true to his master, whom he admired and honored above all things.

The bell now sounds loudly from Murray's room. When James again presents himself, he tells his master that "Tivvy does not know the tother name of the beautiful lady." He had forgotten to ask.

"It makes no difference, I presume; put this letter in the office, and then call at Maj. Lindsay's and leave this note."

He bowed with an obsequious "yes, sir," and his master walked out.

When James went to answer his master's bell, Tivvy slipped up to her mistress's dressing-room, where she found Miss Lindsay and the old lady; they had sat there in secret conclave all the afternoon. Gertrude was dis-

appointed in Murray's promised call in the morning; so she came to fret and complain to his mother.

Tivvy listened a moment at the door before she entered, and heard the old lady say, "I'm glad, Gertrude, you have brought him to *that*, anyhow. But there really is no trusting that man now. Don't feel too secure, my dear. I hope he will go through with it this time. God grant that he may not already have forgotten it."

"What do you mean, madam? Do you suppose he could forget his pledged word, *voluntarily* given, and that to Miss Lindsay?"

Mrs. Murray smiled, and said with a peculiar emphasis,

"Oh, of course not, he never did do such a thing. Now let me tell you of a fact which may have escaped you."

"Well, madam, I'm all attention."

"Charles Conrad Murray was drunk last night; the first time to my knowledge in his life."

The girl laughed hilariously. "What of that, mother? I'm sure he had a *noble* precedent—the first officer in the State. Such high characters can do anything. They almost enoble vice, in my eyes. But what has that to do with our present subject, madam?"

"Oh, nothing, only men's oaths made when they are drunk are not considered valid in a court of justice, and I had thought were even less to be relied on in a court of love. That's all, child, that's all."

Tivvy comes in and hands her mistress the mysterious note which Murray had received at the Governor's. James held this in his hand when he joined her in the hall, having picked it up again on leaving the room.

Mrs. Murray reads and grows white in the face, all to the two hectic spots.

"Something has turned our viceroy, the Devil, against us," said she in a husky voice; "who else knows anything of those dark secrets?"

She now sets to work to circumvent the above men-

tioned gentleman. Having learned from Tivvy that James is ordered to carry letters to the office, she with that far-sighted policy and prompt decision which would have done credit to Richlieu, instructed the girl to waylay James in the hall, having equipped herself for a walk, and then carelessly say to him, that the ladies are waiting for the carriage, which must be at the door immediately. Tivvy should then take the letters and leave the house, as if on her way to the office.

James, well knowing that Mrs. Murray's voice was all-potential even with his master, did not dare to gainsay or even demur to what Tivvy had said, but handed her the letters, and hurried to the stable.

The letters traveled back to Mrs. Murray's dressing-room, and there they stopped. The one addressed to Miss Lindsay ran thus :

“DEAR GERTRUDE—I am prevented by indisposition from calling on you at the appointed hour, as agreed upon last night. To-morrow, I will not fail. Pray excuse my short-comings to-day. I am feeling particularly wretched. Adieu,

MURRAY.”

The letter to Poor Myra seemed to have been written with a tremulous hand, and under great excitement; was blotted in many places, *perhaps* by tears wrung from that proud man; I know not; we deal in facts. It was couched in these words :

“MARIANNA, DEAR MARIANNA—Oh! my God! How can I proceed? My beloved, I have found you, have pierced your disguise, and now all the combined powers of the earth shall not keep me from you. A whole year I have languished between hope and incertitude. Sometimes wild with desire, and always tortured beyond endurance by suspense. Still you hide from me. Why

is this, my love?—my first, last, and only true affection. I have been driven to the verge of despair; have been goaded on to desperate acts, but my love for you, and my steadfast faith in you, Marianna, never wavered. I love you as when we so happily and trustingly wandered in those elysian bowers. I adore you as when we were separated, and the whole world became a bleak and dismal abode of misery to me. Such are my feelings at this instant. Oh my lost bride! my own, my gentle Marianna! write to me, my love, write on the instant, and tell me where I shall find you, and when I shall once more, Oh heavens! clasp you to my wild and distracted heart. And now I vow before high heaven, that nothing short of the arm of Omnipotence, or your own positive and peremptory rejection of me, shall prevent my finding you in less than twenty-four hours.

“Yours, through time,

MURRAY.”

It is impossible to conceive of, much less describe, the rage which took possession of the *beauty* on reading these two documents. The one addressed to herself she tore into atoms, then trampled on the fragments, stamped her pretty feet, gnashed her pearly teeth, and foamed at the mouth, in impotent rage. An insatiable thirst for vengeance, not only on the provocative, but the innocent cause of this outrage, seizes upon her. Oh! it is a fearful and painful sight to see so much beauty marred by anger.

Presently she grew calm, and suddenly checking the torrent of imprecations, she sat down at Mrs. Murray’s feet, and looking up in her face, said with great firmness and emphasis, speaking slowly:

“Mother, I am resolved that this marriage shall take place. I do not care whether *I* am happy or miserable, blessed or cursed, so that I keep him from *her*. I have

set my life on the cast of this die, and in one week more I shall have accomplished my destiny."

"Ah! I don't see now what more can be done," said Mrs. Murray. "That old wretch, Faggot, fails us. He too, has grown craven or insane, maybe impotent—I know not what, I know nothing."

"Aye, but he shall do his work now, and that quickly, else will I play his own game on him. Mother, do you see this hand? Think you it would be squeamish when my vengeance is to be fed?" and she bared her beautiful arm to her elbow, then burst out into a loud, frenzied laugh. "I shall presently pay him a visit, and if he does not consent to act promptly, and from my dictation, then we'll see who is the stronger."

Mrs. Murray had been ruminating moodily, during the time that Gertrude had played off these fine heroics; she now looked up and said:

"I have one more expedient; after that I am done forever. If that fails, I shall scheme no more. If it succeeds there will be no need." She goes to a secret drawer in her escrutoire, and takes out a package of letters, searches for some time, selects one, then says: "Gertrude, can you imitate this handwriting?"

She looks at it carefully, and taking a pen writes two lines.

"Aye, that's it! that will do precisely. He will never suspect. Now take this sheet of coarse note-paper. It must all be in character you know; she is too poor to get gilt-edged, embossed paper to write to her paramour (and then she snarled). Write, child, in the characters of that letter, what I shall indite."

When this forgery was finished, she looked at it and pronounced it a perfect counterfeit. "Now," said she, "imitate my son's." Being also satisfied with that cheat, she proceeded to dictate one from Conrad to poor Myra,

which, when finished, was put into the envelop the superscription of which was written by himself, as the reader is aware. Tivvy was then dispatched with it, and Gertrude set out to visit the old Jew.

She finds James at the door with the carriage : the ladies had both forgotten that it had ever been ordered. She threw herself into it, and giving the direction, was driven rapidly through the street, passing a great many squares ; then pulling the check-string she gets out, saying carelessly, that she preferred walking home, and dismissed him.

In due time she arrives, and enters the miser's den, or stronghold, as once before described. She finds him there in the same crouching attitude, with the same abject, cringing look. While she is engaged in developing that scheme of mischief and crime, and as she relates with a peculiar accuracy, rendered necessary by the affected obtuseness of the miser, how they had intercepted the letters, and had forged others in their stead ; she pulled out her handkerchief, and with it the original letter written by Murray, which falls unperceived on the floor. While all this is going on in the miser's reception room, Leah's ear is at the wall, and drinks in every syllable.

After the lady has revealed to him the whole of that diabolical plot, as devised by herself and that arch-machinator, Mrs. Murray, she takes from her pocket a splendid *porte-monnaie*, and opening it discloses to the miser its contents. And now behold those little, gleaming, serpent-like eyes, those sharp catamount teeth, which are, from some spasmodic affection of the lips, always visible ; ever and anon he licks out his tongue over his lips, like a cat, and clutches his claw-looking fingers convulsively together, as if feeling for something between them. The lady looks on with an amused but sinister smile, as she continues to exhibit note after note, and piece after piece of gold coin

—just as a cat toys with and enjoys the fright and torture of the poor little mouse.

Faggot has glared fiercely on that display of gold, until his little fiery eyes have become inflamed. At last she takes from the case a fifty dollar gold piece, poises it between her fingers for a moment, eyeing him maliciously, then putting it back closes the purse with a loud click. “By de Got of mine peoplesh, dat is too much!” and springing at her he tries to seize the *porte-monnaie*. The lady also started to her feet, and for one brief moment they close in a fierce and deadly conflict.

“What art thou doing, poor old man?” And in the twinkling of an eye the miser cowers beneath the calm, reproachful look of his daughter. “And thou, lady, why stay here to tempt the fiend thou hast invoked? Away! thou hast done thine errand; thy business is ended; now leave this miserable old man to himself, that he may exorcise, as best he can, the demon which has been raised by thy gold. Go! I tell thee for thine own good, haste! If thou hast any to love thee, and for whom thou dost care, then for their sakes, if not for thine own, come not here again!”

“And who are you, pray, who thus dare to queen it over me? Who ever before gave Gertrude Lindsay an order?”

“It matters not, lady, who I am, or who thou art. A moment more and thou hadst been numbered with those that *are not*. I have saved thy life.”

“From what? Saved my strong life; from what? That poor, feeble, crawling thing? that poor, old man? I could crush him with one hand. Poor, old wretch! Think you I fear him, or you? I have that old Jew dog in my power. I could hang him to-morrow, an I would condescend to meddle with such garbage.”

“Lady, thou deceivest thyself in all things. Thou

knowest not with whom thou dost tamper. Thou hast had the indiscretion, on two or more occasions, to leave thy high aristocratic name, on little scraps of paper, with the old 'Jew dog,' which had brought thee to judgment ere this, but for me; and now let me tell thee proud lady, when that poor, despised Israelite is dragged before a court of justice thou shalt meet him there; for thou and thy accomplice, the old lady, are both compromised, irremediably committed with that old 'Jew dog.' And as to thee matching thy strength with his, I should grieve to see it. Look at thy delicate hands and wrists, and judge whether he whom thou seest so bowed now, is always so feeble."

She removed her gloves, raised her sleeves, and found that her skin was bruised and torn in some places, and the blood ready to burst from under her nails. For a moment she looked like a tigress; but that expression faded, and she turned to the Jew with something of a conciliatory tone, and said:

"Mordecai, I do not consider this compact shaken, or at all events it is not broken by this outrage. I hold you to it, and will now pay you the amount stipulated." Then turning to Leah, said, "Girl, I owe this man a certain sum of money, which I shall now pay over to him;" and while she counted it, Leah stood between her and the miser. As she handed it to him, she said,

"Make sure of your work this time, Faggot; let there be no more failures, and I will quadruple that sum."

"Yes, mine lady, I is going to try dis time to close de matter."

"Away, away," said Leah, with an impatient wave of the hand, "if thou hast any regard for the safety of thy fair face and reputation, tarry no longer. Wouldst thou like to be found in secret conclave with Mordecai Faggot, the Jew peddler, Jew dog?"

The haughty beauty and belle cast a look of defiance

on the muffled and veiled girl; but at that moment she felt a degree of respect and deference for that unknown person, such as she had never experienced for any living creature, save Murray. When she had departed, Fag-got turned on his daughter, and cursing her between his ground teeth, commanded her to leave the room.

"My father, be not wroth at thy poor child; she has but done the behest of her sainted mother; only obeyed thy wife, and saved thee from imbruining thy hands in blood, insane old man as thou art." She picked up the letter which Gertrude had dropped, and disappeared. In it was inclosed that warning written by herself.

The miser, after making the door fast, and touching the counter-spring, unlocks the old trunk and secretes the money.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE LETTER.

"MEMORIES on memories! to my soul again
There come such dreams of vanished love and bliss,
That my wrung heart, though long inured to pain,
Sinks with the fullness of its wretchedness."

"Here are few of the unpleasantest words that ever blotted paper."

MYRA sat in her neat little sitting-room, with Clarence in her arms. The beautiful boy had been slightly sick for a few days, and the kind-hearted Mr. Gooch had brought him home, as he said, to recuperate.

"Madam, I leave my little friend with you in trust, until he thinks himself better. I believe he has been somewhat homesick of late. Allow me again to reiterate my readiness to serve you at all times."

On passing Doctor Brown's, he called and requested the doctor and his lady to drop in incidentally, and see Mrs. Wise.

Myra and the old lady are taking their tea. There is no longer any appearance of pinching want; they do not now, as once, sit down to empty dishes, merely for form sake. Times have greatly changed for the better with our friends since first we met them. A gentle rap at the door. Clarence meets them, and is caught up in the arms of dear Gabe.

"Why, Master Clarens, God bless the boy! how he grows and improves."

"Aweel, after all, I can na think staging is sae bad for a bairn, grandam."

The old lady moves about the room without taking any notice of this remark. At last she turns, "What's all that you've got in your arms, Minny?"

"Not o'er much of ony thing, but just a wee bit present for the distinguished Master Clarens."

"Ah, let me see it, aunt Minny."

"Weel, my bonny bairn, sit down in that little chair, and I'll gie it to ye."

So Minny unrolled her little Dot of a baby, Myra the second, and placed her in his lap. Then what glee, and gladness, and fun, and frolic they kept up over that little, plump, white child. The little thing laughs and coos, and throws her little arms up, and knocks her little balls of fists together. But when the baby-girl first of all takes the boy's hand and carries it to her mouth, as all babies will do, then their mirth knows no bounds. The doctor declares that, woman like, she has commenced coquetting at once.

And thus it was that Clarence forgot that he came home to be sick, and Myra feeling no longer alarmed, forgot to be gloomy, and the old lady, who was pleased with all things as they came, except the theater, after having placed everything nicely away and covered up the little tea-table for breakfast, took her knitting, which was a little pink sock intended for that same said little baby, and seating herself in front of the merry group, commenced rocking with an easy, undulating motion. She laughed so heartily at their nonsense that she was forced frequently to take off her spectacles and wipe them, they kept growing so misty.

Oh what a happy reunion was that! How little of such simple, pure, unalloyed enjoyment falls to the lot of many of us. The whole secret of it was, they loved one another. We are told that love constitutes the employment and enjoyment of the angels and blessed spirits in heaven. Then may we not think that the nearest we can approach

to the condition of these superior beings is to love? Love God first, and then love one another with all the ability which He has given us; and this, methinks, creates beatitude on earth.

The little negro had been sent to the post-office, for even the destitute and apparently forgotten inmates of that cottage expected a letter. It was late when the girl returned; but she brought a letter. Myra seizes it, and looking at the superscription, turned deadly pale. She tears it from the envelop, and reads. It was penned neatly, without any apparent trepidation.

"MRS. WISE—Excuse me, Madam, if I am too blunt when I tell you that your warning note came too late, a little too late. I received it last night. I have also penetrated your disguise too late. I know that you are Marianna Glencoe, whom I once loved, and for so many years have thought dead. But Marianna, or Myra, time makes strange changes with us, and in us. I could not have believed it. Seven years ago I could not have sat down so calmly to inform you of my marriage, which will take place four days from this time. Marianna, we loved then; but we were young and tender: you twelve and I just eighteen. How could we expect constancy from children?

"Good bye. Yours, respectfully,

"C. CONRAD MURRAY."

"P. S. I advise you to follow my example as quickly as convenient. Shake off the old shackles, which clog.

"C. C. M."

With a deep groan she dropped the open letter, and falling back in her chair, cried out, "O God! Thou knowest that I do not deserve this from him! My heavenly Father! help me now in mine extremity! There! my friend, read it, and tell me if you think I merit this insult? Had one come from the dead, or an

angel from heaven, and said this of—of—my—my—of Col. Murray, I would have pronounced it a slander.” And she burst into wild paroxysms of grief and lamentation. “I did not think it of him! What have I ever done but love him? Ah yes! so tenderly.”

“Nor do I believe it,” said Doctor Brown. “There are other clever ones in that house beside my friend Murray.”

“But, Doctor, it is his hand writing. I know it. Alas! I know it too well! Would to God I did not!”

The child hung about his mother’s neck, mingling his tears with hers, trying to soothe her by kisses, and many assurances of love; but all in vain. The old lady quotes Scripture, and entreats her to calm herself. But Myra became the more impatient.

At length Minny says: “Let her alone, grandam; this grief maun have its way.”

The Doctor took from his pocket a letter, and after comparing them carefully, said with a groan: “Well; I give it up. I am as much deceived and almost as much grieved as yourself. Here, wife, compare these characters, and see if you can find a flaw.”

Minny took the letter written by Murray to Brown, and the one to Myra; examined them side by side, but she could see no difference. Still she continued to say—“I canna think it. I willna yet gie it up. If Colonel Murray were to come himsel’ and swear to’t, I wadna think he tauld the truth. And now friends, mind what poor little weak Minny Brown tells ye: Just so sure as the good and great God, who made that gentle moon which is to light us hame, is pure and holy, just so sure is Col. Murray an honest man, and a gude ane. He never writ that insulting letter.”

“O my God! Minny, I know that hand-writing,” pointing to the superscription. “I have reason to know it. It is engraven on my heart. I can never forget it, through time and eternity.”

"Well; I can't help a' that: but he never writ that letter."

It was now agreed that Doctor Brown should leave his wife with poor Myra. The whole of that long night she wept, and sometimes tried to pray; but she never got beyond "O Lord pity me, and forgive him! Have mercy, Lord!" And then she would choke up.

After awhile, when she thought they were all asleep, she crept from her bed, and taking out her book wrote for a long time. Minny thought that pouring out her grief to her friendly journal would relieve her; but finding that she only grew the more agitated, the good little soul got up, and throwing her arms around the neck of the poor sufferer, they wept together.

"Aweel, my dear, you mustna greet sae! I canna permit it langer. Myra my love, my sweet sister, good will come o' this yet. You maun trust God, and the blessed Saviour! Lean on him. He, only, never deceives. Come, Myra, let us kneel and prostrate our souls before him." And this humble and pure-hearted creature prayed fervently, but simply and earnestly, that all might eventuate in good for the parties. When they rose from their knees, they both felt comforted.

"Dear Minny, there is a fearful mystery hanging over me."

"I know it, dear; ye hae tauld me sae before; but when ye could have had it cleared up, ye wad not, and now ye maun look above for consolation."

"Dear friend, listen to me. I have long wished to make you acquainted with those secrets; that I might claim your sympathy and counsel, and may be benefited by your prayers; if you should think it worth while to pray for such a poor benighted thing as I am."

"Hush! Hush! Doubt not. You should trust to God's promises."

So they sat there all night—sometimes reading the

journal, and sometimes weeping. It was daylight when Myra concluded the narrative.

"This is a wild, thrilling story, my love, but it will a' come right. I have faith to believe it; and I tell ye, now, that that auld Mrs. Murray is at the head and foot o' a' the mischief, and sooner or later will be brought to shame and sorrow. Come entrust your cause to the tender, compassionate Jesus! Dear suffering soul! I love you ten thousand times mair since I have heard o' your errors. Puir dear! ye ha' been too sairly tempted. God will excuse you, and bless you at last."

Then Minny dressed herself, and taking up the child, rolled it up like a bundle of dry goods, took an affectionate leave of all, and went to her own home.

After breakfast, when the doctor called, he found poor Myra sitting just where he had left her the night before.

"Come, come! This will never do. I can not have such *carryings* on. I will not stand such foolishness. You must go to sleep."

She shook her head mournfully.

"Shake not your head at me," said the little man, with a "mock tragic air." "Has she taken any breakfast, madam?" turning to the old lady.

"Oh, no, I could not even get her to look at it."

"Well, maybe she'll not look at this, either."

He mixed a potion and forced her to drink it; after which he took her in his arms, as he would have done his own little Myra, and without saying a word, laid her in the bed, and covered her up carefully. During this scene which has, doubtless, appeared unfeeling, this good, kind-hearted man, was forced several times to turn away and wipe his eyes.

The next day Murray received the *answer* to his tender, impassioned letter to Myra, which was, as the reader has seen, forged by the same evil spirits, and he, like that poor lady, was completely deceived. He saw, as he

thought, her well-known handwriting before him. He did not dream of fraud — at least he never thought of traitors in his own household. He contemplates those familiar, and once loved characters; but what pen can paint the disappointment, the mortification, and keen anguish of soul, which has come upon that strong man, and makes him even as a little child? Grief has subdued that proud spirit.

And now, behold him walking to and fro in his room, with such languid step, and mournful look. He speaks in a low, plaintive voice, soliloquizing: O God! then there is no trust to be put in any of thy creatures! No faith, no hope! Two days ago, had a man told me this, I would have felled him to the earth for uttering the foul blasphemy. And now, what a change! Yet I do love her" said he, stopping and folding his arms in a quiet, meek manner. "Yes, I do love her, even now, when she has so disdainfully spurned me. I call God to witness that *I* have never been false to *her*. True was I, even to her memory! When I thought her dead, still did I cherish her image in my heart, making the one green spot, amid that arid waste, which was watered and kept alive by my tears. O Marianna! Thou hast now destroyed all chance of happiness for me in this world. Yet I love thee, and still I pity thee! Poor girl! Poor 'stricken deer.' The herd will flee from thee, then where wilt thou find a bosom to shelter thee like this! I wrote that nothing but her own positive rejection of me, or the arm of Omnipotence, should stay me in my search. Oh, my love! my bride! my *wife*, in the sight of heaven! thou hast pierced thy lover to the soul! Would to God I knew where to find her! Even now, discarded, spurned, maybe scorned, I would still kneel and implore her to receive me, and if not, then in mercy to tell wherefore." He takes out the letter again and reads:

"MR. CONRAD MURRAY—Why, sir, do you not let me rest in peace? Why not suffer me to remain unmolested in the obscurity I have chosen? Would you pursue me to the shades of death? Have you not caused me misery enough? Do you wish to embitter the days that are left me for repentance and prayer? Would you destroy that serenity which heaven has vouchsafed to me, and not seeing you to tempt, I have learned to enjoy? I tell you, Conrad, we must never meet. There is a great gulf between us, greater than you know of. So leave me in peace. I will never see you again; I do not wish it. Had I desired this meeting, I would have made myself known to you when I sat by your side, and hung upon your arm. Farewell, forever.

MARIANNA GLENCOE."

"Ah yes, Marianna, thou didst indeed hang upon this arm heavily, heavily, as if overcome by the weight of thy own loving heart. O God! I felt that heart beat against mine, and it seemed as if it would break the bounds of its prison house, to meet the wild responsive throb. There was no dissimulation then; that was nature asserting her supremacy. But now she says, alas! what does she not say? Surely she has dipped her pen in gall. Marianna, thou art strangely altered." He again reads and repeats slowly and emphatically, "I will never see you again; I do not wish it." "Well, I would not thrust myself into heaven even, unwished for. I presume I can live through this, too. We have an allotted number of years to suffer, and toil, and rest, and play the fool, and sin, and repent; and then comes the end. When my cup is full, and I have achieved my destiny, then God will do with me as seemeth him best. Till then, I will yield myself, and float down with the current on the turbid stream of time. Presently, I shall be swallowed up in that great gulf, and shall be seen, and maybe remembered no more among men forever."

He wrapped himself up in his cloak and walked out. He was invoking his former aids to come to his assistance. Pride, that almost curse of his race, where art thou now? Why dost thou hang back thus? Thy slave needs thee; come, put forth thy support. Alas! Marianna has murdered pride in that heart. Philosophy, thy specious arguments do but teach endurance, patience, a proud sort of self-satisfied submissiveness, a self-glorification in the power to endure and defy, but do not heal the wound. 'Tis but cicatrized, and the deep sore still festers beneath.

What is it, then, poor maimed wayfarer? what dost thou need? Thy sick soul yearns for sympathy, for love. Aye, for love! Start not; love has been thy bane, and love must be thy antidote. But love wisely the next time. Set not up in thy heart an idol to rival God. Worship not the creature, forgetting the Creator. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength, heart, and mind. Thou shalt have no other gods before me." How is it with thee, proud man, when the still, small voice is whispering these truths to thy troubled soul? Dost thou relent? Wilt thou now tear away that image, and give thy heart to God? He thinks he would. He feels that he desires to understand, and would like to appropriate these important truths. "Son, give thy heart to God."

Then he exclaims in anguish, "O that I had some one to whom I could trust to show me the way." The still, small voice whispered, "Stay thy soul on Christ, learn of him; thou needest no other teacher. Son, give thy heart to God." That rebellious heart answers, "Oh! I love her yet. Tear her image from my heart, and the mysterious principle of life is gone."

It has grown late, but he does not heed it. Many a little star has begun to twinkle and adorn the spacious firmament, yet he does not see them. He at last rouses up, and finds himself in that portion of the city where our

story opens. He stops for one moment, and muses before that window. Again that tall girl so closely veiled passes by ; he has seen her at every turn, but his thoughts are in no condition to be affected by externals.

As he moves along, his eyes fixed on the ground, he is startled by a burst of rude, coarse mirth. On looking around, he perceives a knot of youths on the left ; they are amusing themselves at the expense of an old woman who has fallen to the ground. She was coming from the market, with a heavy basket of provisions just purchased, when her foot became entangled in the snare set by those brewers of mischief, and she falls heavily, her articles of marketing strewing the dirty earth.

When Murray approached, he found the old lady struggling to extricate herself. She could not rise without aid, which greatly increased their uproarious shouts of mirth and ribaldry.

“Shame, shame on you ! dogs, puppies, cur dogs ! where have you been bred that you could do such a deed, and then gloat over it ?” He then very tenderly assisted the old lady to her feet, commanding one of the boys to gather up the contents of the basket ; and now perceives that they are all inebriated.

Looking mournfully down on them, he says, “Go home, go home and sleep. To-morrow call at the office of Charles Murray. I have something of importance to say to you then.” A sudden jerk of the arm which had been drawn through his, makes him look inquiringly into the face of the old lady, but he sees naught expressed there but suffering. *That name* had caused the shock.

“I fear, good mother, you are injured ? Did I move you too roughly ? Pardon me, I did forget,” and taking the basket on his arm, he said, “I will see you home, madam.”

“Oh no, sir ! I can not tax one like you. Pray, do not trouble yourself. Give me the basket and accept my warmest thanks for this timely aid.” She attempts to

withdraw her arm, and holds out her hand to receive the basket.

"Then, do you reject my protection? Oh, what has come over the world!"

"Oh no, sir. I could go down on my knees to thank you. But what have the rich, and the proud, and the high, and the grand to do with the humble, suffering poor?"

"I admit that they have not half so much to do with them as they should have; but *I*, not laying claim to any of these possessions, will, whether you consent or not, protect you home. See, even now, those poor infatuated creatures, are waiting to pursue their orgies. They are drunk, and did I leave you they would wreak their vengeance on you, for having been despoiled of their sport."

"Ah, sir! God sees, and will reward this good action. I do not know how to thank you." And the old lady wept.

"Good mother, you just now spoke of God. Would that I knew more of Him than is taught in the lofty edifices reared by man, more to gratify his own vainglorious pride, than to honor the great Builder of the Universe. Would that I could feel his presence sometimes, without fear! But I am awestruck when I contemplate that all-pervading, almighty Essence. I almost fear to invoke his spirit."

The old lady was now all alive. The conventional barriers were broken down, and they meet on equal grounds.

"Oh, sir, I am so glad to hear you say so;" and taking his small, white, jeweled hand in her poor, coarse, wrinkled one, she turned her dim eyes, which are now soft and humid, to him, and said, "Oh, sir, can one so lowly as I am, teach you? Surely, you do mock me?"

"Ah no! good mother; could you look into this heart, as God is looking into it even now, you would pity me."

"And God will pity you, sir. None of us are so ready to pity one another, as 'our Father in heaven' is."

"Alas! I am afraid. He seems to be so immeasurably

removed from me. He is so great, and pure, and holy, and I am so vile and abject."

"Dear friend, you must seek him through his Son. None of us dare approach a justly offended God, but through our friend in heaven, who is always waiting to present our petitions to his and our Father."

"But are they not the same; one and the same?"

"Ah! ask me not of such subtleties. I deal not in them. Mine is the simplest of all creeds."

"Then tell me of it, and let me embrace it at once."

"It is said that, 'we shall be taught from the mouths of babes and sucklings,'" said she; "and weak, and unskilled as I am in theology, I can still testify to the love of Christ in the soul, which casteth out all fear, and doubt, and darkness. You would no doubt think, sir, that one like me, old, halt, and almost blind, and very poor in this world's gear, would have little cause for rejoicing. But, my friend, I sometimes feel such fullness of joy, such perfect love to Christ, and to the Father, and to our fellow-travelers here below, that like Paul, I am caught up to the third heaven."

"But, mother, I have heard that this sort of ecstacy, this state of beatitude, if you will, does not last, and that the poor worm is furnished with wings to soar for a short while, then is suffered to fall again to earth."

"I know nothing of this. True, I do not always see God's countenance unclouded; but, as the hymn says, sometimes,

'Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face.'

But my friend, the love of Christ sufficeth us. And day by day, come weal or woe, as long as I keep alive the Divine spark, I am happy. If we have but a crust in the house, I munch it in thankfulness. If the fire goeth out, and the larder shelves are empty, I know that God's storehouse is the earth, and the fullness thereof. His supplies

have never failed me. I never fear that they will fail me. I tell you, my friend," and again she pressed his hand, "that he never slumbers or sleeps, for watching over the fold. Even now, when my poor old crippled feet were entangled in the snare set for the unwary, did he not send succor? I am not injured. You were his agent, and well have you discharged your duty."

Murray is much moved, but remains silent.

"Once before," continued the old lady, "I experienced the special care of the Good Shepherd. Soon after we came to this city, and after a week of unprecedented hardship, privation and suffering, we were relieved at the last hour by an unexpected hand. The sweet Sabbath dawned on our renovated hopes and grateful hearts. I took my little grandson, having attired ourselves in the best clothes we had, and went to one of those stately structures of which you have just been speaking. On arriving I applied to the sexton for a seat; he glanced curiously at our poor garments, which were the best to be found in poverty's wardrobe, and then in a supercilious way pointed to the mendicant's corner. Well, friend, I did not go there to beg, but to offer thanksgivings for mercies. So I would not take the seat. I know not what chance led me to that aristocratic pew; but we had scarcely gotten through the first prayer, when a magnificent-looking woman, covered up in fine raiment and furs, came, and ordered me out. I got up and moved down the aisle, intending to take a seat on the floor, that I might pray for the proud lady ere I left the temple. Before I reached the door the Good Shepherd sent his angel to me, and I was conducted back by a fine-looking gentleman (so said my little grandson, I did not see him), to a magnificent seat. Well, sir, I prayed for that proud lady; I prayed for that good gentleman; I thought I felt the secret intimation that my petitions, sooner or later, would be answered. I have faith, and do believe that the

arrogant woman will be brought to repentance, and that good man will reap the reward of his good deed."

Murray is again greatly agitated; he takes out his handkerchief and wipes his eyes. The plaintive voice, the earnest and sincere manner of the old lady, as she talked of these gospel truths, smote the rock of that proud man's heart, and a fountain of tenderness gushed forth.

They had now arrived before the door of Myra's cottage, and there is an embarrassed pause.

"Friend, circumstances of a very painful nature forbid my asking you to enter our house, just now."

"And I could not, if you did ask me, good mother." He gives her the basket, and then she takes his hand and says :

"Col. Murray, I can not find words to express my gratitude. But it will not always be thus. There is a good spirit at work for you. Trust in that friend whom you, and I, and every living sinner, may claim as his own. He only can make the crooked way straight. '*Trust and wait.*'" She repeated the last sentence with a very peculiar emphasis.

When Murray arrives at home, he finds the parlor occupied by a gay group. Gertrude is sitting at the piano; the Governor and Mr. Gaines are on each side of her. The former hangs over the Siren, and breathes soft, delicious nonsense into her ear; the latter has folded his arms, and looks on with a calm, untroubled brow — never moving, save to turn the music, as she sings song after song.

When Gertrude has played her last waltz, and sung her last song, she rises from the instrument, leaving her distinguished lover, and takes her seat by Murray. She inquires after his health with such an ingenuous look of kindness, that he is touched; looking into her beautiful face (which is, at the moment, apparently free from all

guile), he discovers nothing in it but passionate love for himself. He presses her hand and whispers, "God forgive me! I do not deserve such devotion and constancy."

Maj. Lindsay calls for Gertrude; he had left her there and gone to his club. Some ladies, the Governor, Mr. Gaines, and a few others, had dropped in from their evening promenade, on hearing Gertrude's fine voice.

"Well, daughter, shall we go?" said he. Murray rises and offers his arm. The Governor steps up —

"Stop, sir; I am opposed to a monopoly, as you once said to me."

While Gertrude is drawing her splendid wrappings about her, some one calls off the attention of the Governor. Old Mrs. Murray has Maj. Lindsay fast by the button; Murray has folded his arms, and Mr. Gaines steps up to her, and looking keenly at her, says, "Madam, let me see you home."

They reach there full one hour before her father comes in. During that time, they are engaged in a conversation, which is so absorbing that they do not see Ann as she passes about, making various pretexts in order to look and listen.

Presently they hear the Major come in, and Gaines has prepared himself for an angry rencounter of words with his master. Be it remembered that Maj. Lindsay had been to his club. Going to that place sometimes makes a man see too well (double); sometimes prevents him from seeing at all (as he should).

He comes blustering and reeling into the room. Seeing Ann there, he says:

"See here, girl, where is that d —— d interloper? that long-legged clerk of mine? He came home with Miss — hiccup — Lind — hiccup — say. Where is that son of a — hiccup — of — of a hic — d — it, I say, where is that son of a hic — of a — cup. Where is Gaines? If I find

him I'll make him — hiccup — I'll — hiccup — leave in short order," and he storms at the negro, who is bursting with suppressed mirth.

"Marster, does you mean Mas'r Josiah? He didn't stop no time, nohow, at all. He's bin gwine away, 'long time ago,' as the song says."

"It is well for them both that he did," says Lindsay; and he staggers up to Ann, and catches at her. The girl gave a little squeal; he curses her, and then reels off to bed, hic — hic — hiccuping all the way.

When Mrs. Murray and her son were left alone, she informed him that the wedding, to suit the parties, had been hastened a few days: and such a wedding, and such a fête as that would be, had never before been witnessed in the city of ——. She told him that cards had been sent to all the old aristocratic families in the place, and also to other cities.

He listened to her in moody silence. "Only two days more of freedom! Well, let it go on, mother. Why bother me with these details?"

"Remember, my son, there must be no more disappointments;" and she fixed her basilisk eyes on him, while she went on explaining; but Murray neither saw the look, nor heard the words.

Presently he got up, and walked gloomily across the room.

"Mother, as I have always told you, arrange these things to please yourself, Gertrude, and Major Lindsay: as to myself, I do not feel that I am a party *much interested.*"

While all this commotion, bustle, unrest, and discomfort (in the way of splendid preparations) are going on in the two mansions, Murray alone was quiet. There was a stagnation of feeling — a collapse of the heart — which was worse than acute suffering. He seemed to have resigned himself to his fate. For two whole days before

the wedding, he denied himself to every one except his future father-in-law, and his friend, Doctor Brown.

When the latter entered, he found him as usual, pacing the floor ; he did not indulge in his natural strain of badinage, but looked thoughtful and very grave. At last he said,

"Well, Murray, do you think you will go through with it this time ? or shall we have another break-down ?"

"I presume my mother and Gertrude will carry out their projects, now. If not, then God help them and me too. They have been caucessing for such a length of time, and those schemes have been conceiving for"—

"Ah yes!" struck in the doctor, trying to smile, "they must bring forth now, else there surely will be an entire abortion."

"I don't know how it will turn out ; I am myself waiting for the denouement," rejoined Murray, looking very sad.

"You are willing then, Conrad, are you ? You want this wedding to come off, do you ?"

"I wish to be at rest. I know no quiet ; have not for over a year."

"Minny passed last night with Mrs. Wise, who is sick again." (Murray trembles, and averts his face.) "While there, Myra received this letter. She (my wife) is, as well as myself, extremely anxious to know if you are the author of it ?"

Murray seems greatly surprised, and drew himself up haughtily. Doctor Brown takes the letter from his pocket.

"Col. Murray, is this your handwriting?" presenting it.

"Certainly it is, sir," said he, looking at the superscription.

"Open it," added Brown. He did so, and glanced carelessly at it, without reading a word ; and just then remembering the disdainful response, said coldly,

"I wrote that letter, sir, why do you ask? What more would the lady have?"

The Doctor saw that he did not read the letter, and felt vexed at his indifference. Rising abruptly he said,

"Well! I must say, it is rather the coolest thing I have yet witnessed. Good morning, sir."

"Stop a moment," said Murray; and taking from a basket two cards for the wedding, said, "I hope, sir, you will do me the honor to bring your wife with you?"

"No sir, no, no sir; from this time, Col. Murray, we are strangers;" and he laid the cards down on the table and left.

"Well, that is certainly strange conduct in my old friend? I do not know what it means," said Conrad. In fact I do not know what anything means. Ere long I shall not be certain whether I am awake or asleep, dead or alive."

CHAPTER XXX.

THE WEDDING.

"FEAR ye the festal hour ?
Aye ! tremble when the cup of joy o'erflows !
Tame down the swelling heart ! the bridal rose
And the rich myrtle flower have veiled the sword."

A BLAND and beautiful evening precedes the night of the wedding, but it is dark, very dark, where the gas does not prevail. Maj. Lindsay's mansion looks like a crystal palace. The scene is one of enchantment.

And now the brilliant crowd is assembling. They come pouring in like a continuous stream. The rooms are full, but not crammed. All are there ; the venerable clergyman, with his long, graceful gown, sits ready ; the company is ready ; the bride is ready. A slight nervousness seizes upon the guests ; many watches are covertly examined, and the words buzzed through those gorgeous saloons, "Ten o'clock ; past ten o'clock."

Let us take a short retrospect. At nine, the Governor and the other attendants had called at the mansion of Col. Murray. They sent him word that at half past nine his lady bride would expect him. The carriage was drawn up before the door.

Soon after this, Mrs. Murray tapped at his door. She found him in his *robe de chambre*, ensconced in an easy chair, reading.

"Merciful heavens ! Charles Conrad Murray ! What in the name of God are you doing ? "

"Nothing, madam."

"I see, sir. Are you crazy?"

"I think not, madam. Do you see any symptoms of this calamity?"

"Is not this your wedding night?"

"Certainly, madam, I am perfectly aware of that untoward circumstance."

"Then what are you sitting there for, *en dishabille*?"

"I was waiting for my lady mother to notify me of the proper hour for everything. Will you not, madam, have all things done according to the most approved and politic plan? It is not the first time you have done me this honor."

"I do not wish to hear another word, sir. I would have you get yourself dressed and join your friends in the parlor; the Governor and your other attendants are waiting for you below."

"Are they, madam? Do me the favor, then, to pull the bell-rope there on your right. But will you not be seated, mother? You are looking particularly elegant to-night."

When the servant came, Murray looked at him listlessly. "Well, James, *your* mistress, and *my* mother wishes me to be dressed gorgeously, no doubt, for this *her* second marriage. Twice now has she married me off without once gaining my consent."

"Not yet, Mas'r Charles. She aint not married you up but once yit awhile, and as Tivvy do say, 'Dar's many a cup 'twixt de slip an' de lip;' so take heart, Mas'r Charlie; somethin' may turn up yit."

"Come, James, bestir yourself, man, and let me be ready for whatever it shall be that may turn up."

James was the very prince of all black *valets de chambre*. So at ten o'clock Col Murray entered the parlor, where his coadjutors had been consoling themselves for the loss of time with an impromptu bottle or two of wine.

When he came among them, they sent forth the most

hilarious shouts and congratulations. They are now admonished by the head and front of all things, Mrs. Murray, that it is time to depart. So the bridegroom offered an arm to his mother, hands her to the carriage, then he and his friends walked, feeling absolute need of fresh air, ere they should be in a condition to face that brilliant assembly, and that grave and reverend person with black robe and white bands. And now they are there, and the buzzing words have changed to, "They've come, they've come."

Murray separates himself from his party, and takes his way to Gertrude's boudoir. He finds her arrayed in all her glory, looking very queen-like and beautiful. She is surrounded by her maids of honor. He goes up, kisses her, and in a hurried voice desires her to send a message to the gentlemen.

They come, and now they descend to the back drawing-room, which has been kept closed up to this time. There they arrange themselves before those great doors, reaching quite across the room, which in a moment more slide into the walls as if by magic, and that magnificent bridal party confront that gorgeous company.

Col. Murray is very pale, but is looking unusually interesting and handsome.

The clergyman meets them, opens the book, has gotten through the preliminaries, and in a few minutes more he will have pronounced those thrilling words — when a loud, prolonged shriek is heard, succeeded by the appalling cry of "fire!" It resounds through the house. Then another shriek, and the cry, "The gas! the gas! A gas-pipe has exploded in one of the rooms above, and the atmosphere will ignite," screamed some half-dozen voices.

Nothing, perhaps, save the "last trump," when it shall sound, will produce a greater panic, or take the world more by surprise. Many rushed shrieking from the room, some threw themselves from the open windows; nearly

all tried to precipitate themselves into the street. The parson was overturned in the mêlée. Poor old Mrs. Murray was upset, and but for the timely aid of some friendly hand, would have had that ingenious piece of frame-work totally demolished. No one now is observing his neighbor; for a season, curiosity is quenched by the stronger passion, fright.

Murray stood with Gertrude on his arm, like one entranced. Presently, Mr. Gaines whispers in her ear; then she unclasps her hands from that fond hold, and he leads her away. And now Murray rushes from the room, but not to the street; he goes to see what can be done to save the house.

When he reaches the hall above, he finds that portion of the mansion in total darkness. What a change, from a moment before! As he descends, a tall figure, completely muffled, touches his arm, and whispers, "Come, there is nothing the matter *here*. I am waiting for thee; follow me quickly, else we shall be too late."

He instinctively obeys her. She glides rapidly on before him. They leave the house and that quarter of the lighted city, and plunge into darkness. A hundred fire-bells seem to be ringing; an hundred hundred of people seem to be running, and jostling, and falling, and getting up, and crying, and screaming, but all tending in one direction; and now the engines come rushing and tearing by.

He has followed the veiled figure without question. Onward, onward they go. And now they come to the scene of action. A cottage, standing a little apart from the other buildings, is on fire. It seems to be too far gone to claim the attention of the red-flannel-shirted crew, whose efforts are directed to protecting the adjacent buildings. All this was taken in by Murray, at one *coup d'œil*. The veiled figure says to him, as she shakes him violently:

"Rouse up, now; thou hast no time to dream! Plunge into the flames, and save Marianna Glencoe!"

"Great God! what do I hear!"

"Lose no time in idle exclamations or queries. This was her abode. See there! The good Murdoch is bearing out the old lady, and Dr. Brown has the child; but where is poor Marianna? When thou hast found her, come not this way, for ravening beasts are waiting to seize upon you both; but come out into the back-court. I will be there to receive you, and bear you to a place of safety. Mind my injunctions; come not this way." She throws a woolen shawl over his head, and draws it tenderly about his face, saying, "Poor fellow! I would shield thee from this, too, an I could, but I must be obeyed to the letter, else all is lost."

A piercing wail is now heard through the crowd—"My mother! Where is my mother? Who will go with me to save my mother?"

The child was caught up by the veiled figure, and at that moment Murray rushes frantically into the burning pile, and disappears amid reverberating shouts of admiration and groans of horror. "The lady! the lady!" is echoed through the crowd; the child has extricated himself from those kind arms, and would have followed Murray, but the figure again seizes him, saying, "Keep still, my darling, they shall save thy mother."

Scarcely had the flames closed over the head of the poor fellow, before Murdoch comes up to Leah, and whispers, "Where is he?"

She points to the burning pile. "There, gone to save Mari"—

"Great God! girl, what have you done! She is not there, and he will perish." Snatching up a blanket, he wraps it about his head, and plunged also into the fire.

"Now, may the God of Jacob help them both, else are they lost!"

The girl had not more than uttered this thrilling cry, when the roof fell in, and all is one masss of blazing wood, and soon after a smoldering ruin.

Then a prolonged groan convulses that crowd, which at last finds vent in the cry of "Oh! they have perished! Oh! most horrible! Poor fellows, they are lost! they are burned alive!"

Leah gives the child to a bystander, with directions to carry him immediately to Dr. Brown's. Then she darts into the dark alley leading to the back court, where she had placed persons to await her coming. When there, she finds herself quite alone. There is nothing to be seen but flying red-hot fragments and blazing cinders. There is no one waiting for her in that fearful place; the carriage is not there, as she directed.

She screams, all brave and enduring as she is, with alarm and anguish. Her shoes, which were silk, are burned from her feet, and now she tramples, barefoot, on red-hot coals. Yet she stands there for several moments, insensible to physical pain; so utterly overwhelmed is she at the apparent destruction of three persons in whom she was so deeply interested: then she turns away, "a puir heart-broken thing."

The panic at that festive mansion has subsided; some few persons have had presence of mind and courage to explore the rooms above, and find that the cause of alarm was a false one in the main. The accidental, or premeditated expenditure of gas had filled the rooms with that noxious stench, which none can inhale long and live. This is all that has yet transpired to the guests below. Those who had ventured in their wedding garments to the place of actual distress, had returned, and reported that it was *nothing* only a cottage of some poor person—a milliner or dressmaker had her house burned down, and had perished herself in the fire.

"Oh well, if that's all," said the leaders of ton, "then

let the festivities proceed." The Minister is still there, looking very plaintive and martyr-like since his overthrow from his arm chair. The bride is there, in her vestal robes, so pure and white. The father is there to give her away; and hundreds of friends, as friends go on such occasions, are there, smiling obsequiously and parasitically, all waiting to offer congratulations, but more specially to enter on the pleasures of the fête.

"Come, let the ceremony go forward," said the father, glancing at his watch. "It is now near twelve o'clock, and the repast is yet untasted; and still worse, but few of those rare juices have been imbibed. Why, friends, we shall scarce have time to test the merits of either table or sideboard. Where is Murray? Where is my son elect? Murray, Colonel Murray," called the mirth-loving host. "Why, man, come on; you mar our sports, and delay the festivities, instead of leading the way, and teaching us how to sacrifice in *spirit* and in *substance* to the jolly God. I tell you now, sirs, the 'Old Grey-Beard Bacchus' will not be cheated thus, without reprisal."

"What ho! Murray! Conrad! Charles Murray! where are you, my son? Come, we are waiting to be gracious."

Major Lindsay passed through the gorgeous scene with an easy careless gait (peculiar to persons who have been always rich), and called on the bridegroom in a jocose voice, and with a merry twinkle of the eye, stopping anon to jest with some congenial chum on the subject. "But he comes not."

A buzz, a whisper, a murmured conjecture, swell into a full tide of curiosity, and love of wonder, with the words, "He is not here; where can he be gone?" One has seen him jump out of the window on the first note of alarm. Another has seen him rush from the street door. Some few saw him stealing up stairs. All saw him standing before the parson, beside his bride: but none saw the truth. None had seen him leave the house by the back-

door with that tall girl so closely veiled. Yet there was one who did see this. One pair of calm, steel-like grey eyes saw it all. The same hand which drew that beautiful bride away from the side of her majestic bridegroom had something to do with the turning on of too much of that noisome fluid. He alone saw Murray leave the house.

Messenger after messenger is dispatched in all directions, through the long suit of rooms above and below, to his own house, everywhere; but as yet there is no trace of him.

In the meantime, the Governor flirts as usual, with Gertrude. He is again pouring into her ears the insidious language of adulation; uttering protestations which were as factitious as the hearts of the aristocratic guests, who with the host and the little great man, the clever Governor, had not failed to attest their devotion to his Godship.

Miss Lindsay is seated on an ottoman in the center of the room, with a crowd of admirers around her. The big man of the evening is hanging over her, seeming to gloat on her exposed and transparent charms. She is indeed looking delicious. He forgets himself, and in rather too distinct a whisper murmurs, "My angel! you had better reward some one of your faithful servants, and leave that erratic orbitless star to his fate, which must sooner or later explode, or set to rise no more. It is a sin to throw away such charms on that passionless man. He is totally insensible to the value of such a possession."

O "spirit of wine!" she owes this to thee. The girl felt what the excited man said. Had he searched through an hundred vocabularies, he could not have found words more suited to her case, or better to embody her sentiments, as well as so acceptable and soothing to her mortified vanity and wounded pride. She looked lovingly up into his face, she inclines her person toward the lascivious

little man, she even offers a soft, tender response. Then the Governor whispered something which none could hear, and the lady raised her flushed face and burning eyes to his.

The inspiring sound of violins is now heard from the dancing saloon, and as the Governor gives his hand to Gertrude to lead her to the floor, she once more encounters the deep, earnest gaze of Mr. Josiah Gaines fixed upon her. Those eyes seem ever to have had a peculiarly penetrating power. That one steadfast look has probed the hidden places of that vain, weak heart, and brought up the secret. It is written on that blanched cheek, and revealed from those timid, cowering eyes.

A few cotillions, and as many waltzes, are gotten through with, not trippingly "on the light, fantastic toe," but heavily and mechanically. The genius of mirth seemed to have been frightened away. Nor would Terpsichore deign to preside over such soulless offerings. Maj. Lindsay gave his arm to Mrs. Murray, and they lead the way to the banquet. Time will not serve me to tell of all the luxuries and dainty dishes of meats, cakes, confections, fruits, wines, etc. Pyramid upon pyramid of bride's cake rises in stupendous grandeur, as monuments now of the uncertainty of all earthly plans, the precarious tenure of all worldly hopes. A whole hecatomb of *birds* have been sacrificed. Turkies which, from their size, looked as if they might have been patriarchs over many generations of pee-pees, were flanked by ganders who had stood sentinel during the halcyon days of many a grey goose, whose heads are all now laid low. Alack-a-day! this dreadful onslaught: and for what? To commemorate an event which only goes to confirm the truism, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

The champagne foams and sparkles. Glass after glass is drunk in token of admiration to the goddess of beauty, and in honor of the prince of good cheer, Maj. Lindsay. Atlast,

the anxious expression of every face seems to be yielding to this genial influence. The somber demon has been exorcised, and in his stead reigns a spirit of mad mirth—a simultaneous desire to indulge deeply, unsparingly, recklessly in pleasure: a unanimous disposition to banish care is now manifest, and well have many of them succeeded. Already are they oblivious of that which should have marred such unholy orgies. But the audience had been despoiled of the play, the pageant, in the way laid down in the programme, and now the reaction is taking place.

"This is certainly a very brilliant, joyous, hilarious, and rather too uproarious assembly of wit, beauty, and nonsense," said the calm, dignified Doctor Mercer, alias the parson, to his wife, as they stood apart from the revel, and looked on in silent amazement.

"Ah!" said the lady, "what children! In the exciting bowl they have already forgotten the missing bridegroom."

"Hist! hist! listen! What sound is that?" Not louder at first than the buzzing of the drowsy insect, but it swells. Why is there a suspension of all pursuit? Why are those delightful little giggles suppressed?—those whispered vows of love in beauty's ear, and the responsive protestation breathed up to luxuriant moustache and whiskers? Why are they arrested? Why is that cup dashed before it reaches the lips? And above all, why is that sweet morsel which has been rolled under the tongue so impatiently for the last hour, that piece of honeycomb, that delightful little scandal, forgotten? Why that shriek, and that sinking form? That indistinct murmur has again formed itself into words, which have reached the ears of the mother—her son is dead. Col. Murray was seen to rush into the blazing pile, which soon after became a mass of living fire. There had been no chance for escape; he had perished.

Mrs. Murray's lifeless body was borne to her own dwelling, and a message dispatched for the family physician,

Doctor Gabriel Brown. In the meantime, while Tivvy and James are hanging over their mistress, and a few persons, either out of compassion for human suffering generally, or maybe idle curiosity, are trying to restore the imperious old woman, let us return to the festive hall.

On hearing this stunning report, the Governor, who really was attached to Murray, left Gertrude standing at the table, the glass of champagne raised, but untasted, and hastened out to learn more fully of this horror. All eyes are now turned on the bride. She does not shriek, she does not faint, she utters no word; she is very pale, and her eyes are distended and glaring. There she stands, so beautiful and statuesque. Horror seems to have frozen her. Those terrible words have surely petrified her. She moves not, speaks not, does not so much as breathe a sigh. Every one views her with amazement, but none care enough for the haughty beauty to put forth a finger to touch and rouse her from that catalepsy.

Major Lindsay had also left the house, perhaps like the Governor, to make assurance doubly sure by being a witness of the dreadful spectacle. They doubted not that the charred and mutilated body of the glorious Murray would be wrested from the fire ere it was consumed. All is commotion and noise in that banquet room.

Mr. Gaines steps up to Miss Lindsay, touches her arm, and taking the glass from her hand, says, "Madam, had you not better retire?"

"Sir?" said she, looking vacantly in his face.

"I say, would it not be pleasanter to withdraw from the rude gaze of the curious?"

"Yes, sir, said she, looking around timidly; "but where is Gov. ———; he is to meet me at three" —

"Silence, madam; would you furnish more food for gossip?"

He took her hand, and led her from the place like a child. When they were in the adjoining room, he rang

the bell furiously. Ann came in; he whispered to her for some time, then said, "Do not on your life, Ann, leave her a moment, or admit any one to her, not even her father, unless forced to it, till I come. Now, girl, remember. Aye! Remember!" He repeated this word in a voice as solemn and ominous as did poor Charles the First. After which, he spoke out in a loud, careless tone—

"Ann, conduct Miss Lindsay to her room," and turned away.

The company had now dispersed; a neighboring clock rung out three; Mr. Gaines alone remained. As he strode through those gorgeous, but desolate rooms, he unconsciously hums, "Oft in the stilly night." Then looking around, moodily folds his arms and sings while he walks, smiling sardonically—

"I feel like one who treads alone, some banquet hall deserted;
Whose lights are fled, whose garlands dead,
And all but me departed."

Then hearing some one enter, he ensconces himself behind a folding door, and curiously peers out.

Major Lindsay comes in, throws himself into an arm chair, covers his face with his hands, and weeps. After indulging this silent grief, he adds: "Poor fellow! poor Murray! To be cut off thus in his prime! To be separated from his bride just then! Ah yes! he obeyed the summons, and 'left his bride at the altar.' And for what? To immolate himself to an abstract principle of good. What was that milliner woman to him? Nothing! But universal philanthropy prompted him to all good deeds. O my son! my noble, my magnanimous son! I shall never, never again, see thy equal! Never again find one to fill thy vacant place in this heart." He smites his breast. "Poor Gertrude! poor girl! poor bereaved bride! in my own selfish grief, I had forgotten thy greater sorrow! Poor thing, I almost fear to see thee!"

He rises, and takes a few turns through the rooms; sometimes almost touching Mr. Gaines. Then exclaims in a very sad voice, "Well! I will go to poor Gertrude; I will say what I can to comfort her! Perchance I may hit upon the right words. If not, then we can mingle our tears together." He leaves the room.

No sooner had he gone than Josiah rings a small hand bell, and Robert enters.

"Well, Robert, what news?"

"Not much, sir; I did as you told me."

"Well."

"I followed the Governor down thar."

"Well."

"Then I followed him back, but he could'n hardly walk, sir."

"Ah! yes, Robert, you played your part well."

"Yes, sir, I put all that morphinous stuff in the bottle of sherry, as you told me to; then I set it right on the sideboard, whar I know'd Marster and the Governor would come to *swig* it, and so they did sure 'nough. But Marster perfers champagne hisself, and the Governor does love sherry, and that's the fact. Well! I declare, Marster Josiah, I thought the man was gwine to go fast asleep on the ground, when he stood there, with his eyes fast shut, gazing on that burning house."

"Well, what now?"

"Well, that's all."

"Why, did you leave him standing there?"

"Oh no, sir; I tetch'd him on the arm, and tetching my hat at the same time, I axed him ef he hadn't better go home? And as you told me, I enquired ef he warnt gwine back to see Miss Guttrude? Then he cuss me, and say, 'Robert, what the devil do I want with your Miss Guttrude or any other gal in my condition?' I say to him, 'She 'spect's you, sir.' Then he say, 'Expects hell fire: I don't doubt it, knave. But I'm not going, and more than

that, I never meant to go.' Then he cuss me, and drive me off. Then he call me back, and he say, 'Here, my good Robert, take this dollar, and when you go home, tell your young mistress that I am very sick, *mighty sick*.' Then he stumble long, till he git to the 'zecutive mansion, and that's the last of that poor man, as I knows of."

Robert puts his hand in his pocket and takes out the dollar which the Governor had given him, exclaiming, "Lors a marcy! bress my soul! Look a here Mas'r Gaines, this is pure gold! How much is it, Mas'r Joe?"

"It is only fifty dollars, Robert."

"Oh marcy! Then I must go this minit, and carry it back to him, musn't I Mas'r Gaines? Would'n that be right?"

"Yes, Robert, but you hav'nt time now. Here is another piece like it. And now attend closely to what I am about to tell you: and if you obey me to the letter, and prove trustworthy throughout, it will no doubt lead to your freedom." Then he explained to the negro very minutely his plans—to which he readily assents.

"Then put these things a little to rights. Reduce the light in that burner, and extinguish those in the hall. When you have done all, wait my further orders here. I shall go out for a short time." He left, closing and locking the street door.

It will be remembered that Maj. Lindsay had left the parlor for the purpose of seeking Gertrude in her boudoir. When he reached the door, he hesitated, saying to himself, "I'll be cursed if I don't dread it." He knocks softly; then answers to the gentle "Come," by opening the door. He found his daughter standing in the center of the room, as if awaiting him.

"Ah, poor child! expecting your father? Waiting for him? Well, poor girl, you still have one true heart left to love you. Come to your father's arms, and let him tell you how he loves and at the same time pities you."

"Pities! pities me! Did you use that word, sir? I think he would hardly venture on such an experiment. No, no, my father, he had better not talk of pity to Gertrude Lindsay. I believe he does love me; he has told me so a thousand times, and to-night he has again reiterated this, and made honorable proposals, and"—

"What the devil are you talking about, Gertrude? Have you lost your senses? Who? What, in the fiend's name, do you mean?"

"Why, sir, may I inquire what you mean? Not a moment ago, did you not tell me that *he* loved me, which I have long known; and when I agree to accept his love, because I spurn his pity, is it thus you rate me?"

Maj. Lindsay rises from the seat into which he had dropped, and stands before her.

"Now, once for all, Miss Lindsay, I wish to be informed of the meaning of this enigmatical tirade. Else, I shall be convinced in my mind, that your senses have become unsettled by the great calamity which has fallen upon us; and must consequently give orders to have you conveyed to the white house upon the hill forthwith, if I am forced so to think."

"It is thus I am forced to think of you, sir. I shall be pleased to be convinced to the contrary. But to convince you that I am as sane as ever I was, I will consent to gratify you by a few details of facts.

"I meant Governor —, and it was of him I supposed you spoke, when you made that declaration. If not of him, then of whom did you speak? May I beg to be informed?"

"Deluded girl! He cares more for polities and popularity, than for ten thousand Miss Lindsays. I spoke of myself."

The lady looks troubled and disappointed, continues to watch the door, and seems to be all the time in the attitude of listening.

"Gertrude, I came here to mourn with you. I hoped we might console each other for the loss of my lamented friend, and your affianced husband. But strange, heartless girl that you are, I find you already prating about some new lover."

"Well, and where is the bonny bridegroom, sir?"

"I hope he is in heaven ere this."

"Ah! now, my father, you are the poor, deluded one."

"Why so? hundreds of persons saw him rush into the furnace of fire, to save a poor creature whom he did not know or care about, other than from pure benevolence. A poor milliner, I'm told, who"—

"Never mind about being explicit, sir. I know all about it. That woman has been his paramour for years."

"I don't believe it."

"It is, nevertheless, true, sir. True as holy writ."

"Well, what of it? Methinks your woman's heart—that is, if you are a woman, and have a heart—must needs acknowledge the magnanimity of such a deed, and could but mourn over such a catastrophe."

"Would you have me grieve for one who cares not for me? who has trifled with me—disappointed me? who for years, has wantonly sported with my feelings? Preferring that humble creature—that obscure, low-born, unknown woman, to Gertrude Lindsay? I tell you, sir, his heart was never in this marriage! He never loved me! He did but yield himself to a necessity!"

"Fool! What necessity was there? what compulsion could there be, or other motives than love and pride, to marry the heiress of the house of Lindsay? Speak, girl—explain."

"I have said, sir"—

"Girl, you have not! You dare not look me in the face and tell me that you have laid him under this necessity; or, by all the gods! I will strangle you where you sit."

Have you yielded yourself to this man, Gertrude?" looking fiercely at her, and approaching her menacingly.

She rises with great dignity, and in passing him, says, coldly:

"Peace! peace, sir! I am in all things exactly worthy of just such a father. But you have misconceived me. I meant, though, what is most strangely true, Conrad Murray is, from some mysterious cause, so completely under the domination of that skillful piece of patchwork, his detestable old mother, that I believe he would sacrifice his life, rather than oppose or disobey her. Besides his fortune is broken, and needs propping. He knows that, without some such adjunct, he must, ere long, appear before the world bankrupt. Yet I must do him the justice to say, that this marriage was none of his seeking." And she turns moodily away.

"Why, then, did you consent to marry him?"

"Because I loved him from the first moment I ever saw him, wildly! madly! absorbingly! idolatrously! sinfully!"

"Wretched girl! How could you love unsought?"

"Go ask the winds why they blow? why the torrents roar? why wild beasts prowl, and old ocean swells and surges? Can ye stop and stem their course? Then no more could I quell the passion which boiled and raged in my heart for that man. They perform their functions and obey their instincts, and thereby fulfill their destinies; and so shall I mine. Father, leave me alone! I would sleep."

"Poor girl! and he deceived you, when you loved him so much? Curse him! I'm glad he is burned alive."

"Now, again, you are at fault, sir. Col. Murray is not dead. Ere the week passes he will be here again. And now, hear me, father; I swear by all the saints and angels, and all other holy things in heaven! as well as by all the evil things in hell! that Conrad Murray shall never again look upon the face of Gertrude Lindsay."

"Why you would not lay violent hands on yourself?"

"Oh no! but remember my words. Come, father, it is late. I must retire."

She kisses him, and attends him to his sleeping-room. On returning, she stands before the mirror for a moment, tosses back her graceful ringlets, and, with a smile of complacency, soliloquizes: "I do believe, as everybody tells me, that I am very beautiful, and not yet in my zenith. I have wealth, which is power! Aye! yes! and one or the other of us shall rue the events of this night!"

She hears a soft step in the entry, and, as the door opens, springs forward, exclaiming,

"My dear Governor! I have been waiting so long to see you—until I am half dead!" She throws herself into the arms of Mr. Josiah Gaines. Not meeting the ardent embrace which she expected, she raised her eyes and would have shrieked, but, in a dry, quiet tone, he says:

"Better not—better not make a noise; take things easy now, else you might bring your father back. I have come as ever, with the intent to do you good."

"But you must not stay, sir! Oh, you must begone this moment. Go quickly! I shall be undone if he—he—finds —. In short, I am waiting to meet a person here, by special appointment."

"I know," said Gaines, "but he will not come."

"How do you know?" cried the distracted girl, "you do not even know of whom I speak."

"Think not? An hour ago, Governor — returned from the fire to his own house; where he is now, doubtless sleeping off the fumes of two gallons of wine."

"Oh, then, you do know my secret, and I am humbled before my father's clerk."

"Need not be; I have learned nothing new to-night." Then he took a seat by her on the sofa, where she had gone into hysterics. He manifested no alarm at her

situation, although there really was cause; but waited in silence until she grew calm. Then taking her hand he said, "Gertrude." He had never ventured on this familiarity before; and the lady started, and essayed to look haughty.

"Never mind, do not become excited. This is no time for idle forms and set speeches. Gertrude, I wish to speak very seriously to you. Will you listen?"

"Go on, sir," said the beauty, proudly.

"I have come to make you acquainted with certain facts. Then I await your decision."

"Go on, sir."

"Well: In the first place, Col. Murray has not perished in the flames, as is believed."

"That is nothing new to me, sir. I never believed the rumor, after the first stunning announcement. But go on, I say."

"Then Governor —— never meant to fulfill his engagements here with any honorable designs. His purposes are all nefarious, his only desire being the gratification of lust. He would never have married you, Gertrude, even if this last bubble had not burst, and left you here, as you must feel you are, a mark for the shafts of calumny, the jeers of ridicule; in short, a thing for the 'finger of scorn to point at.'"

"Stop, sir, I will hear no more."

"You must hear me out; and I do not wish to be interrupted." He takes out a note and reads very slowly and emphatically:—

"DEAR JOE—I am ordered by my sister Clara to invite you to meet a gay party at the old homestead, on the 6th of next month. She has at last got her own consent to marry the merry little Governor, who has (like Jacob of old) served seven years for her. We will take no denial.

Yours, truly,

T. W. LANE."

"Colonel Murray, without intending it, has, to-night, placed you in the most painful situation."

"Did you come here, sir, to probe my heart, or to gloat over my degradation? to deliver a lecture, or preach a sermon?"

"For none of these purposes. I came to give you an opportunity to save yourself from further insults and mortifications, by giving me a right to protect you. Or if not so, then to aid you in your own plans in getting out of the dilemma."

"But how? In what way can you protect me from those assaults?"

"Only as your husband, madam."

"*You* my husband?" — almost shrieked the lady.

"Aye! Your husband! Better that, than the thing I've been;" and he fixed those steel-like eyes on her; while hers, as ever, sunk beneath the keen cold glance. Again she went into hysterics. Her companion took no notice of this; but after calmly waiting for a few moments, took out his watch and said very dryly, "Madam, I wait your decision."

She looked up and said, "Josiah, have you told me the whole truth?"

"Far from it, I assure you. I have told you the truth, and nothing but the truth, but God forbid I should tell you the whole truth."

"Oh! what must I do? What is best? Do advise me, my last and only true friend." She took his hand and pressed it to her lips. All this he endured very composedly, without the least excitement. "Tell me what you propose."

Then he explained his wishes and plans, which ended in the lady throwing herself into his arms, and crying, "Well, take me and do with me as you think best."

"Now go to your room," said Gaines, "and get ready,

for in one hour more it will be broad day. I will await you here."

When Gertrude went to her room, she saw with astonishment Ann sitting with her traveling dress and bonnet on. A large trunk was out in the floor, all packed, with dressing-case, band-boxes, etc. Gertrude's traveling attire was also lying on the bed. Without saying a word, Ann commenced disrobing her mistress, talking as she worked. "No time to chat now, Miss Gutty. We must be off, else we can't get off. Come, let me fix your hair up plainer like. We must hurry now."

A low tap at the door.

"Come."

Mr. Gaines entered. "Come, my dear," said he. The lady started, but in an instant recovered herself, and tried to smile her thanks. Poor soul! she felt like the drowning wretch, who seizes the plank thrown into the whirlpool.

Now they are ready, and Mr. Gaines places before her writing materials.

"Write to your father, Miss Lindsay," said he.

"Oh mercy! For God's sake do not ask me to do *that*. I can not; I am afraid."

"Gertrude, it is due to yourself, your friends, and myself. Besides, it would be an unpardonable disrespect to your father."

"How can I? How can I address my father? How can I tell him that I have—have—Oh! how can I write to my father, who is so passionate?"

"You will not be here to witness it. Write; we lose time."

"What must I say, Josiah?" taking the pen and looking pleadingly into his face. She repeats the question, "Oh tell me, dear Josiah, what I shall say."

The young man turns away, and smiles with a peculiar expression — walks across the room, then says, "I would

not presume so much. Your own heart must be your Mentor in bidding your own father farewell."

"O God! I have no heart — ('I fear not,' struck in Mr. Gaines) — to do this or anything else."

"Write, madam! Address two lines to your father, accounting for your disappearance. In less than five minutes I shall leave. If you have done it then, and are ready to accompany me, I shall doubtless *be honored*. Write."

"MY DEAR FATHER" — "Oh! I can not! I feel incompetent to this difficult task."

Mr. Gaines has taken his seat very composedly across the room on a divan, with his watch in his hand.

Ann comes to the door, and says, "It most day, bress God! If you don't start soon, you gwine to hab de sun to light you on your road to ruin." Gaines smiles sarcastically, and again admonishes Miss Lindsay of the flight of time.

Then with the look and manner of desperate recklessness, she dashes off the following note :

"DEAR FATHER — I have placed myself under the protection of the only man who never did deceive me. I shall write from the first post.

YOUR POOR DAUGHTER."

She handed it to him timidly, saying, "I could think of nothing else to write. Pardon me if I have not said enough to please you."

"It is sufficient. Now shall I have the pleasure of handing you to your carriage?" offering his arm.

When they reached the street it was still dark, and after walking a few squares, they came to a vehicle. Gertrude was handed into it; Gaines sprang in after her, the maid following. He had placed himself by her side and folded his arms, and after giving the signal, spoke not another word.

They drove off at a furious pace. A few market cart-men and the post-boy riding drowsily along, were all who saw that flying vehicle.

When the sun rose, they were many miles on their way. The blinds were securely buttoned down; the inmates heeded not the hour. And now that proud, arrogant, spoiled belle of a large aristocratic city, slept quietly on the humble bosom of the second clerk of a commercial house — her father's book-keeper — a man younger than herself. But she, with all her accessories, and her high, haughty spirit, will find her match in that pale, quiet young man.

She rests in peace now in his arms, where we will leave her for the present to dream; aye! to dream.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE ELOPEMENT DISCOVERED.

"ALAS! what stay is there in human state,
Or who can shun inevitable fate?
The doom was written, the decree was past,
Ere the foundations of the world were cast!"

AT eleven o'clock, Maj. Lindsay sat at breakfast ruminating over the events of the past evening. He adjusts his spectacles midway between his eyes and the point of his nose. Then takes them off, and wipes them; puts them on again a little nearer. Anon he wipes them again.

At length he exclaims, "D—— it all! if I don't believe I'm growing old; hardly though — my lady Murray reads without the cursed things. But whether the book is up side or down it is all the same to her. Ha! ha! ha!" Sips his chocolate, and reads the last journal—having placed the glasses again on the point.

"The public' — ahem! 'The public notice is invited to' — the devil! Will they never get up anything new? 'Wanted, a young woman to' — go to h—— with such stuff! Humph! What is this? 'Fire — everything lost — nothing saved but' — 'unprecedented heroism!' Ahem! — 'plunged into the flames' — Yes, poor fellow! You did indeed plunge right into — damnation! I believe I'm turning woman, or fool, which is the same thing." Wipes his eyes — "God only knows, when these old eyes were ever moistened with grief before. Poor child! no wonder she shuts herself up — Such a loss! Such a loss! Oh me! Oh me!" Rises and rings the bell.

Tom comes in, who is only an assistant groom. "Where is Robert?" asked Maj. Lindsay.

"I dunno, mas'r, I can't not find him."

"Where is Ann, then?"

"She aint not come down yet. I reckon she sleep too, like Miss Gutty."

"Has she been called?"

"Yes, sir; but every one of the doors of Miss Gutty's rooms is locked."

"Go bid Mrs. Bluster come to me immediately." The house-keeper soon presented herself—full of importance.

"Mrs. Bluster, I am sorry to see you so backward in having things placed to the right about. It is now twelve o'clock, and the whole house looks like a pandemonium."

"Yes, sir, I know such is the true state o' the case; but I have been waiting orders from the head o' the quarters."

"What has Miss Lindsay to do with house-cleaning?"

"Nothing, sir, with house-cleaning, but a great deal with house clearing. Many of the things, here, is borrid. Way out from the very outsquirts of the city. Nobody knows nothing of the places, but the young lady, Ann, and Robert. All three of them can't be found. Cook says she 'sposes they's asleep, after their rebel last night; but I reckon they's drunk, or gone off, somewhere or nother, I do"—

"Silence! Now, Mrs. Bluster, I want you to do credit to your profession, and to your name. Ere night everything must be in *statu quo*. Call in help, if you need it, five, ten, twenty hands; but let me on my return see a comfortable house, and a real snug tea-table, with something racy and nice. Miss Lindsay, you see, has taken nothing to-day. She must be compensated for walking down stairs, you know." He takes his hat and cane, and goes out.

"Miss Lindsay *taken nothing* to-day! Little he knows

about it. Poor old man ! I guess she 's took fits 'fore now. I wonder how he'll stand it. Heigh-ho ! Well, *it is* wonderful how some folks do wom themselves round our affections, and quirl their hearts about ourselves. Ah ! it takes dear Mr. Josiah Gaines to do sich things as above mentioned." She places her arms a-kimbo and marches out of the room, with a very *knowing* and consequential air ; sighing, as she goes, " Ah ! yes, it does that."

When Major Lindsay left home, he went straight to the house of Mrs. Murray. Gertrude's words flashed across his mind, and he felt troubled. She had said, " Before one week is over, he will be here." " It is strange," said he, " but perhaps she knows more than any of us ; I will call." He reached there, and rang the bell, but no one came : he rang again. Then he opened the door and entered. All was still and lonely. He walks through the deserted and dismal-looking rooms below, then made his way upstairs.

Tivvy comes from her Mistress's room, wringing her hands and weeping.

" What's all this ? Is the devil to pay here, too ? "

" Oh yes ! I believe so, sir."

" What do you mean, girl ? "

" I don't know, sir. But I believe the gemman you jest mentioned *is* to pay, and he gwine to take poor old Mistis for the debt."

" Explain yourself, Tivvy, else I'll give you this cane. I will."

" Oh, sir, I don't mean nothing, only I fear the devil is to pay, and poor Marster Charles not here to witness the transaction." Seeing him look wildly at her, she added petulantly : " Lor ! Major Lindsay, is you so subtuse as all that ? I mean my poor old Mistis is about to move her washing to a warmer climate. He ! he ! he ! Hugh ! hugh ! hugh !" And the negro laughed and cried at the same time.

"Good morning, Doctor Brown. How is the old—I mean how is Mrs. Murray?"

"Bad! bad! sir. Bad state of things, sir. I hardly think she will survive this shock. The loss of her son seems more than she can live under," said Dr. Brown, with feeling.

"Pshaw! she never cared for any body in her life, but herself."

"Well! I don't know about that; but this stroke is overwhelming. It has unsettled her reason. Hark! Listen to those maniac shrieks. I am going after my wife. She begs to see her before she dies."

"Does she think her case so desperate, then?"

"I believe so. She raves incessantly for her son. Does not seem willing to give credence to that rumor of his death. Good day, sir; I am in haste."

Major Lindsay felt strangely depressed. All things seemed to have lost their roseate hue. He plodded on his way down street; his eyes fixed on the ground. Presently he quickens his pace and looks up. "Well! d— it! I can't help it! Why should I go bowed down in this way? I'm sure I did all in my power, while he lived, to please and honor him. No use in grieving myself to death, because he is dead. I'll call for the little Governor, and take him home with me, and we'll make a jollification over it, just to keep off the azure demons, as Gertrude says." So he knocked up his friend.

When they reached home, they found all the house in order, and a comfortable-looking tea-table set out in the back parlor.

"Ah! this is glorious, Major; this looks like a man had something to come home to."

"Oh yes! If Gertrude is good for any thing, it is this. She makes a fellow's home very attractive in the evening. Here Robert! Ann! Jack! Tom! Dolly! Cook!

Bluster! anybody! where are your varlets? the devil take the negroes! They are more trouble than they are worth. Here, hand these cards to Miss Lindsay, and tell her we are waiting for her, as well as the tea, in the back parlor."

The servant soon returned with word that all the doors to Miss Lindsay's suit of rooms were fast, and that they had knocked loud enough to wake up the dead, all for nothing. Mrs. Bluster was sent up to have the door forced. The house-keeper came down, whimpering and whining; she pulled her nose and stuck her fingers into the corners of her eyes, to help her on to the melting mood, while she thus delivered herself: "All things remains edzactly as they was, but the sweet bird has flew away. The cage is filled no more forever. But *here* is writ out the passage of that same bird. Oh! oh! oh!" She hands Gertrude's note to Lindsay, who this time reads without glasses.

"DEAR FATHER— I have placed myself under the protection of"—

"Hell and damnation!" cried the Major, springing to his feet with the alacrity of youth, "who is there on the face of the earth who never did deceive? There, read the d——d thing, Governor, and tell me which of the parasitical puppies has played me this scurvy trick. But I don't care who it is, they will have their hands full, and ere long they'll find out the wormwood and the gall, instead of the honey and the honey-comb. Who is it, Governor? Who is the scapegrace?"

"Why, my dear sir, don't you know your own confidential friend and private secretary, and second clerk of the house of Lindsay & Co.?"

The father cast his eyes down, and mused for a moment, then looking up cheerfully, said, "Well, I'm glad it is no

worse. After all, I reckon Gaines will do better for her than anybody else ; but, gad ! they have taken me greatly by surprise."

" How so ? Did you not see that the fellow held an influence over her superior to all others, not excepting yourself and our poor, lamented Murray ? "

" Ah ! well, what's done is done. Here, ho ! Robert ! John ! Joe ! varlets ! where are ye all ? Here, bring wine ; we'll drink to the continuance of it, and to their very harmonious lives," laughing sarcastically, " as well as to their rapid onward route."

" Not so ; we'll drink to their speedy return to their friends, and their own splendid mansion. Now, my dear Major, you must write this very night, inviting them back."

" Well, wait a bit ; wait, Governor. Let us have time to ponder."

" No, sir, not an instant. If you do not write now," flourishing his hand with mock heroic air (the Governor already felt the encroachments of the subtle fluid), " the last link shall be broken which binds me to thee !" He strikes the waiter containing the decanters and glasses, which are dashed to the ground and shivered, the costly wines deluging the rich Brussels carpet.

" Many a true word is spoken in jest," said the Major, pointing to the wine.

" Ah ! there's no joke in that. It is a sad truth, besides a most unholy use of a good thing," affecting to look grieved. " But we can call up more wine ; we can again invoke that spirit. But who will restore our Pleiad lost ? or fill her place at the festive board ? Come, write, bereaved old man, and make us your debtor for exquisite and *untold* joys."

So he writes and invites his daughter back, and tenders his forgiveness for that to which in his secret soul he did not object ; urges them to return immediately, and sends

his best respects to his son-in-law; then seals and addresses the letter to the care of Mr. Josiah Gaines, Esq. The Governor looks on, and smiles meaningly, as he says,

" Already do honors begin to cluster around the head of the neophyte great man. In twelve hours he is distinguished among men as accepted lover, husband, and esquire.

Huzza! huzza!
Long live the happy pair!
None but the brave deserve the fair."

" Hurrah! hurrah!" cries the Major, tossing off another glass.

The reader may be at a loss to know why the Governor was so much interested about the return of Gertrude, after his glaring defalcations. My friend, Governor —, was a roué in the most polite sense of the term, equaled only in that sort of profligacy by our quondam acquaintance, Mr. Calderwood. This gentleman is announced at this moment. Soon after, they all three enter on the most entire, absorbing, sense-destroying, soul-killing saturnalia.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CHAMBER OF DEATH.

"Of all
The fools who flocked to see or swell the show,
Who cared about the poor corpse? The funeral
Made the attraction, and the black the woe."

WHEN Doctor Brown reached home, he found Minny with the heart-broken little Clarence in her arms, trying to soothe him. The poor child continued to send forth heart-piercing lamentations.

"Oh! my mother! my kind, sweet mother! Where is she? Where is my beautiful mother?"

Mr. Gooch is sitting by, holding one little hand, while the other arm is thrown around Minny's neck. The kind manager says, "My son, if you would exert yourself, you might be able to succeed. Besides, I think it will beguile you from your griefs." The child answers,

"No, sir, I can't ever any more. The life and soul of action is gone from me. I should disgrace my former self. I can't go there now, to be a mere machine, to move only as I am prompted."

"But, Clarens, the forfeiture of my pledged word to the public will ruin my present, and your future prospects. Come, boy; come, my son, think of that."

"Alas! sir, I have no future. All is swallowed up in this present anguish. No, no! Mr. Gooch, I would do more for you than any other friend save this one," nestling still closer, and hiding his face in Minny's bosom, "but my occupation is done."

"Poor boy! But what then will you do? Lie there and sob your life away? You can't, though; you would not; for in that you usurp the place of the little fledgling in the cradle."

"I don't know, sir, but I hope God will let me die. Then I shall go to my mother." This child, young as he is, was so deeply imbued with the spirit of poesy that he involuntarily employs the language to express his own grief.

"Aweel! Now it's nae use spaking to the chiel that gate! Gang awa', man. Dinna ye ken that the very soul is gane out o' the bairn for action, as he says himsel'? Canna ye see it? There's nae heart in him to do onything, for sairness. Puir stricken deer, you shall rest here!" said she, pressing him fondly to her breast, "even though the wee bit Myra shall have to gang awa' to a foster mither."

Mr. Gooch looks distressed and slightly disconcerted. He stoops down and kisses the child; then going up to old Mrs. Wise, offers his hand, which she refuses, and turns from him. He then shakes hands with Minny, and leaving a paper within hers, says, "For the use of the bereaved ones." When he had closed the door after him, Minny opens the little roll and finds it to be a fifty dollar bank note. The good little creature weeps, and cries out, with much feeling,

"Thank God! It wasna then the luve o' filthy lucre that made him worry the puir bairn sae. See, dear Gabe, what the man meant by them whispered words."

"Ah yes! Gooch is a noble fellow; there is no doubt of that. And Minny, when you remember that to the votaries of the stage there is no separate existence from it, no individuality, no domestic life, you can not blame Gooch. Its members are pledged, and devoted to self-abnegation. Many a poor crushed woman is compelled to smile, and bow, and sing—aye! and merrily too, and adorn the

festive board, and play off the gorgeous queen, or dashing high bred wife to some lord or duke, when her heart perhaps, has been that day buried with the loving husband of her youthful choice. Her poor bereaved heart swells in that lonely bosom, and throbs wildly; then burns, yea burns to go and lay itself down by his side. The big tears are forced back on that poor, parched up thing to revive it, and produce a little life by which she shall be enabled to go through with the roll assigned her by her taskmaster, the manager. Still she smiles and laughs, and carols, and maybe dances. The audience does not know; these ladies and gentlemen only view the surface, and by its smooth brightness are deceived. If it be tragedy, some more reflective and sympathetic person will say, ‘How feelingly she plays her part! How naturally she weeps! How chastened is her manner in the character of the wife.’ Some one rejoins, ‘Why, I had thought her heart was not in the play, that she seemed pre-occupied. See, now, how her features fall, and how the smile fades from her face, while her opposite speaks; and see that start as if aroused from sleep.’ Then comes the whispered communication, that that splendid personification of folly has that same morning lowered into the earth her first and last friend, the faithful husband of her trusting bosom. Some few commend, ‘such admirable magnanimity, thus sacrificing private feelings to the interest of her employer.’ A few cry out, ‘Oh how heartless! How can she appear here in all those fantastic gauds, to play the fool for the gratification of that extortioner, the public? I know I can never endure her again in my sight!’

“But wife, dear wife! None but God looks into that heart; none but He takes cognizance of its throbings and its promptings. That night, when she is released from service, even in those royal robes she takes her way to that lowly sod, that new made grave. The little stars look down on that mourner. The lonely tree-frog, the

hootling owl, and the melancholy howlings of some poor watch-dog (like herself chained), mingle their dismal notes with the wails of that heart-broken wife. But, my dear wife, there is an eye and an ear open at all times, and they watch over that lone one."

"Oh! my ain dear husband! say no mair; for the luv o' God, say na mair! I dinna ken much about sic things, but the little I ha' read and heard, gaes to testify to the truth o' the picture!" cried Minny, now weeping as if her own little loving heart was going to break, or else exhale itself in sighs and tears.

"Gabe! dear Gabe! for heaven's sake tell me where ye learned all that? I feel like I would be willing to turn to a tree-frog, or an owl, or some puir dog, that I, too, might accord my sympathy to the puir, dear, tragedy queen."

Dr. Brown could not refrain from laughing, sad as he felt. He stooped down and kissed his wife tenderly. "Heaven bless you, my dear wife! I love you so much, and I am so grateful to God for such a gift, that I firmly believe, after a while, it will make me good and religious like yourself. But I had forgot my mission. Give the bairn to the grandam, wife. You must come with me. One of whom you would never have thought, is calling frantically for you—says she can't die in peace until she has talked with you."

The little Clarence had fallen asleep. Minny places him gently on the sofa, and spreads a light shawl over him. Then she puts on her bonnet, and taking the arm of her husband, departs without asking a question. She is satisfied to know that some one of God's family is in distress; and glad and thankful is she, that he makes her his instrument in ministering to them.

On arriving at Mrs. Murray's, they find her more composed, and she has now, apparently, an interval of reason—a lucid ray. She beckons Mrs. Brown to her, and, taking her hand, says, very feebly:

"Sit down. I must hasten to tell you what I have to say, without loss of time or waste of words. Now, swear to me that you will faithfully execute my dying injunctions. Come, swear!"

"I canna do it. I must na swear, madam. But I will give ye my word o' honor, which is better, because not sinful."

"O Lord! I can't get anything done the way I want it," cried she.

"Dear woman, ga on. It maunna be lang that ye shall ha' to speak. I promise, and God above hears me."

Mrs. Murray looks about her anxiously. Minny goes to the doctor, and whispers something to him. He approaches the bed, raises the patient, and says,

"Drink this, it will give you strength to do and say what you wish." He feels her pulse, then adds: "I leave you in the hands of my wife, who can do you more good than I can."

"Now, my dear little woman, take that portfolio, and sit down by me. I must write to my son." Seeing that Minny looked greatly surprised, she rejoins, with energy,

"You think him dead, but I know better—I know better."

"Why, have ye ony tidings o' Col. Murray, madam?"

"Do not interrupt me or ask me questions, it throws me out. No, I have had no information; but something assures me that that poor, wronged, and deceived one—that good son and honest man—must be recompensed, even in this world, for his mighty sufferings. A criminal ambition for high things and places; a wicked thirst for vengeance—for trivial offences; and oh! a fatal attachment, which brought me nothing but sorrow, and a no less fatal promise, made to an unworthy object, led me to barter my own soul to the evil one (who only could have prompted such fearful devices), whereby I destroyed the happiness, therefore the usefulness of my

son—one of the most gloriously promising youths that ever lived.” She became so fiercely agitated just at this juncture, that Minny was compelled to administer another sedative mixture.

“And now,” said the suffering woman, “write as I shall dictate, and remember that the paper is not to be given till after my demise. No, not if it could snatch me from the jaws of death, must you let it pass from your hands before I have been dead and buried three days. Disobey me under pains of being haunted all your after life by a phantom. As sure as there is a devil in hell, and he gives me the power, I’ll come back and stand at the foot of your bed as I look now, ghastly and grim. Yes, when darkness covers the earth—when the elements wage war with each other, and even your brave soul becomes faint with consternation, *I* will then be there, and you shall see it and know it.”

“Oh! for Christ’s sweet sake, think o’ better things. Woman, your soul will pass away, and ye ha’ given it no ‘tendance, provided no passport to that far off country, and awfu’ journey. Here on my knees I promise; but be brief. Then let us provide something for the puir sinfu’ soul.”

“Too late! No time now! Let me make what restitution I can to those two poor, wronged children. Now write as I shall dictate.”

So Mrs. Brown sat there patiently waiting on the dying woman, as she slowly and painfully indited that letter. When it was finished, she closed her eyes and lay so still that Minny became alarmed. She held her ear down to see if she breathed; which she did, but so softly that one would think that nothing save infancy and innocence could know such downy sleep.

Minny folded up the paper, intending when the patient awoke to get her signature if possible. The sick woman continued to slumber for some time quietly. Presently

she became restless—breathed with difficulty—then deep and labored sighs are heaved up, and convulsions ensue.

Minny becomes alarmed. During the time that the invalid had slept, the dear little “dot” of a woman had arranged everything in the room for the night vigil. It is now dark, but that splendid lamp is made to emit a soft and mellow light. Those alarming symptoms increase, and Mrs. Brown feels sure that immediate dissolution is at hand. She therefore scratches the following note to her husband :

“DEAR GABE: I canna just say, but I think her time is about come. I dinna wish to stay alone. Go fetch Lucy May and Jenny to stay wi’ the auld folks at hame, and you come quickly. It is awfu’ dismal here. Solitude at sic a time is nae sa winsome. Make haste, Gabe, dear.

“MINNY.”

In a short time he is there, and his looks show that he thinks her words are prophetic.

“Gabe,” said Minny, “will she ever wake up?”

“I think not, dear wife; not until the last trump shall wake her.”

“Oh! my husband, it is too dreadful, too awful to rush into the presence of a pure and holy God, wi’ all her lifetime sins upon her soul!” And she weeps vehemently.

“Come, wife, come! no use in that. She does not go uncalled. It is the regular summons, dear; and God can do no wrong, you know. ‘He can cause the wrath of man to praise him.’” And so they sat there by the bed of sickness, as once before, hand in hand; loving each other even more tenderly than then.

The hour is late, and very solemn; the stillness is appalling. The labored breathing of the patient is only varied by the beating of their own hearts. The clock strikes twelve. The doctor scrutinizes the features of the patient;

places his finger on her pulse. Then they sit down again together in silence.

The watchers are startled by the violent ringing of the street door bell. Soon after the door burst open, and Col. Murray stalks in. He is ghastly pale, and his beautiful locks are scorched, and his whiskers on one side are burned nearly to the face. His eyes are inflamed, his face blistered in many places, and covered with patches, and his hands are bound up. Minny, uttering an exclamation of joy, ran to him, and actually threw her arms around his neck. While the Doctor exclaimed,

“God bless my soul! God bless my life! Where have you been? Have you just come from the infernal regions, sir?”

“Ah! I don’t know; it is a strange place.” Then his eyes falling on the corpse-like appearance of his mother, he drops on his knees, and taking her hand, wept over it in silence.

She roused up, looked wildly around, and then her gaze settled on the kneeling figure of her son. A ghastly smile o’erspread her face, and now commenced the most painful struggles to speak. It was soon discovered that she was unable to do so; the power of utterance was gone; yet it did not seem to be the paralysis of death. She beckoned Minny to her, and made such violent efforts as almost threw her into spasms.

“Oh! my Father in heaven! what shall I do? The puir old body is struck dumb, and there is something on her mind which she wants to say to her son.”

Murray remained kneeling, with his face pressed on her hand.

“What do you want, puir woman? water?”

She shook her head; the good creature continued to enumerate a great many things. At last, seeing her look very earnestly at a book shelf, she repeated, “book.” In a moment the sick woman’s face brightened up, and she nodded assent. Then Minny got a dictionary, and opened

it at the alphabet, and she spelled by pointing to each letter, "Tell my son to come." And as he stood by her, she went on, "Have you found her?"

He answered, "Oh! no! My mother, will you leave me with this secret, which has bowed me down for years, still unrevealed?"

The dying woman nodded to Minny, who then took Conrad's place, and holding the book, put her finger on the alphabet and said, "When I come to the right letter, nod your head. So she moved her finger down the list, until the patient, becoming impatient and nervous, seized the book, and, with great effort, spelled, "Seek her in the den of the Jews."

"Oh!" cried he, "she is not there; I know she is not."

She looked despairingly at him, and then slowly and feebly made out, "Mordecai Faggot, the Jew Peddler."

Murray sprang to his feet, and putting on his hat, was about to leave the room, when Minny, seeing the expression of anguish on the countenance of the fast sinking woman, laid her hand on his arm, and said, as she pointed to the patient, "Not yet, my friend. Ye canna leave her now. Sit down by your own puir mither."

He takes the seat, and the poor creature rewards him by a look of intense gratitude. Minny leaves the room, and calls her husband after her. Comes back, and takes her seat again by the bedside. In ten minutes, Dr. Brown returns with Dr. Mercer, the rector of St. Paul's church. The lady opened her eyes on hearing his name, and looked steadfastly at him, but very mournfully. But when he would have questioned her on the state of her feelings in view of that great change which was about to take place, she gave no sign of understanding. He could make out no indication of feeling whatever, only when he at last said, "There's yet time! turn your dying eyes to Christ! look upon the cross! while the lamp of life burns, however feebly, there is yet hope; she shook her head.

"My poor friend, repentance may be a short work. Think of the thief on the cross! Have faith."

She, by an impatient gesture, intimated that she wished him to cease. Then he bowed himself in prayer, while that little band of mourners knelt around the death bed. When they arose, they found she had fallen into a deep sleep, from which she never roused up.

About daylight, the pulse stopped, and that restless, perturbed heart, which, for forty years, had been a busy scheme shop, also ceased to beat. The breath had departed, and the mysterious principle, or spark, had gone back to its source.

All is over, the son kisses the cold, rigid, features, and leaves. Mrs. Brown proposes to send for one or two neighbors; but Tivvy informs her that she had been made to swear on the holy Bible, that there should be no curious, prying eyes in that chamber of death. So they perform the last sad offices themselves alone. Every thing was left to Dr. Brown and Minny. Governor — came to offer his condolence and services. Major Lindsay kept aloof. Poor Murray did not seem to know what was passing, who came, or who went, or one word that was said to him. He continued to pace the room slowly, with his eyes fixed on the carpet, entirely absorbed.

The funeral was one of unusual pomp. A great concourse of people swelled that dismal train. But mourners, there were but three—the son, that faithful maid, and an old beggar, with long, flowing, milk-white locks, little snaky eyes, and catamount teeth. He was seen to shudder, wring his hands, and sprinkle dust on his head.

When the multitude had dispersed, that proud man, and that humble beggar, remained. The son and the servant of the poor clay beneath, met each without seeing the other, and sat down on either side of that mound, and wept. The one for sorrow and loneliness; the other for foiled and disappointed avarice.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE MARRIAGE.

“THE hour of marriage ends the female reign,
And we give all we have to buy a chain ;
Hire men to be our lords, who were our slaves,
And bribe our lovers to be perjured knaves.”

ABOUT the same date, the quiet citizens of the village of —, were startled by the dashing appearance and furious driving of a splendid equipage through its lonely streets. The noble dapple greys were driven by a remarkably fine-looking negro servant. They stopped at the best hotel in the place. A fair, slight, delicate-looking young man handed a magnificent-looking lady from the carriage.

They entered the house, and to the landlord’s obsequious bow, he said, “Let us have two of your best rooms put in order immediately, sir.” When the host had left, he went up to the lady, and said in a calm, but respectful tone, “Madam, do you feel much fatigued ?”

“Oh yes, tired almost to death ; but, dear Josiah, why do you address me so formally. I think you should spare no pains to please and soothe me now, when I have just made such a sacrifice for you. It is as little as you could do to call me by pet names, Mr. Gaines.” The young man smiled quietly.

“Oh yes, I know, but we must let all such things come naturally, and in the course of time, by familiarity and association.”

The lady pouted and seemed very dissatisfied. Mr.

Gaines put on his hat and moved toward the door. She jumped at him, and cried out in a passionate voice, "You shall not leave me, sir. I will not sit here by myself in this dreadful place." He laid down his hat, and then threw himself into a large old rocking chair opposite to her.

Just at that juncture, the landlady came in, announcing, with the same sort of servility, that "the rooms were ready." He offered his arm, and they follow the hostess up stairs. There they find the two servants, Robert and Ann, flirting as usual.

"Girl," said Gaines, going close up to Ann, "I think you told me once your mistress had promised that your marriage should come off the same time as her own. Now get her ready and yourself; I am about to make that promise good. In fifteen minutes I shall be here."

In less time, he came with the pastor of the Presbyterian church, and going up stairs, he brought the lady down, the servants following. When the master, and "like man," were married, the former presents the parson with two doubloons, which was no doubt a real God-send to the poor fellow, as his black cloth began to look rather seedy. The white bridegroom conducted his bride back to her chamber, and the black one was ordered to bring up the trunks.

The next morning, the following letters were dispatched on their way home :

"DEAR FATHER — About ten minutes ago, we were united. I hope, dear sir, you will approve of this step; at all events, forgive it, as it was the very best thing I could do at the time and under the circumstances. I begin to think that you did not understand or appreciate Mr. Gaines at home. I know now that I never did; but I feel, convinced that I soon shall, and perhaps, after awhile, learn to love him.

"We shall sail for Europe immediately on reaching New Orleans. I regret that I shall have to take my servants. You know, sir, that I could never make my toilet without Ann.

"After seeing everything in Great Britain and on the Continent, we will come back to stay with you. I hope the establishment will be kept up as before I left home.

"Send me a check for \$5,000; we shall need this much for the outfit. The next must be drawn on the Bank of England, etc. Ann was married immediately after I was, and is now Mrs. Ann Gaines; as I subscribe myself,

"Your respectful daughter,

"GERTRUDE GAINES."

"DEAR MISS MOGGY ANN—I bin intend to write you accordin' to promise, ever sence we all 'loped dat same night of Miss Gutty's weddin', what didn't turn out no weddin', as you has no doubt hearn afore now. Now I know, Miss Moggy, dat you and my other two intimate friends, Mis Callerwood and Mis Nancy Jones, is a'most dead to hear how we new-married folks stands it, and gits along. Lor' bress your soul! you don't know that Mas'r Josiah; for we all b'longs to him now, ever sence 'bout ten minutes ago, when we was all bound up to him in the holy bands of hymenial matrimony, by a keeper of a meeting house, vulgarly called the pasture of de Prisperterian church. Miss Gutty seemed mazin put out when she heard he hadn't got on the black gownd and white bans, and vowed she wouldn't not be married by no sich a barbararian. But my master, Mr. Gaines, jist set hisself down, and folded up his arms, and said :

"Well, Miss Lindsay, it makes no great difference to me. Far as I myself's concerned, it all de same way. I shall enjoy myself jest as well; but I thought it was due

to my benefactorer, your father, and his daughter too, to have dis bisines 'tended to wid no loss of any time.'

"Den she stomp her little foot, and wring her small aristocraticous hands, and cry, and cry, but it all de same to him. Lor', Miss Moggy, you'd think dat man had been married all de days of his life time, he look so lonesome and pitisome like. I tell you all, dis man's gwine to turn out somethin' great. Because why? Well, he is de first man, woman, and child what ever did git de upper hand of Miss Gutty Gaines, and he's gwine to keep it too. He'll make her stand the right about wheel; that's the way to tell it.

"But still, dear friends, I don't know whether dat and all her great money estate will suffice to make de poor fellow happy. 'Oh, he do look so gloomy, and grand-like,' as Will Hatspeare says. 'He seldom and never do smile, and when he do it, of sich a short kind, as if he knocked hisself, and scorned his sperrit, that could be moved to smile at nothing at all.'

"But to de pint of de subject. Presently she come off all dat. When he git up and put on his hat, and at de same time one of dem perculiar short kind of smiles, and bow and say, 'Good evening, Miss Lindsay.' She jump at him, same as any cat would at a rat; and while she bite her lips with madness, she say, 'My grashus, Josiah, I'm jis a joking, I'm ready to do anything on de face of de yarth that you wants me to.' He never answer a word; but having 'splained to me before all about it, he gave me de sign to follow on. And after dey was bound up, den de man of God bound me and Robert up, so we jis in dat pedicament at dis present junction. I hope we'll all be made able by de grace of Divine aid, to perform our parts well, and faithful to the end; and above all, dat our performance may prove satisfaction to every one of us, is de prayer of your friend,

ANN GAINES."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE HAPPY HOME.

"His clean hearth stone, his thrifty wife's smile,
The lisping infant Prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary kiaugh and care beguile,
And makes him quite forget his trouble and his toils."

WHEN Murray left the grave of his mother, and turned his steps slowly toward his solitary home, he found his friends waiting for him there. Minny left her husband, and meeting him placed her hand on his arm, and looking up kindly into his face, said, "Come wi' us, my friend, we hae the best claim to ye to-night. Ye must not go in there to greet and glower all by your ain sel'. Come wi' us, and we'll try to do ye good."

"My dear madam," said he, pressing her hand, "I should make but a sorry and somber companion, this evening. I should only mar your happy home."

"Ah! Never fash! What was friendship made for, or what are friends gude for, if it's only in moments o' joy, and hours o' gladness, that we are to be found? Come wi' us; ye shall be situated just as ye see fit; either to mak' ane amang us, or to go to yourself. And then we are no' sae cheery there, now, as we hae been. Sic troubles as these must reach every heart." So he suffered himself to be led along.

On entering the parlor, Murray thought he had never seen so complete a portraiture of domestic comfort and happiness. You will remember the month is May, and in this genial clime, now, all rude winter winds have been chased back to their northern homes, by the balmy breath

of spring. The atmosphere in that large pleasant room is redolent with sweets exhaled from beautifully arranged vases of fresh flowers. A sabbath-like serenity pervades the place. The lights are thrown out from rose-colored glass globes, shedding through the room a soft, roseate sunset hue. Plain but neat sofas, divans, and ottomans, footstools, etc., are gracefully disposed about, over the rich Turkey carpet. A table stands—not ostentatiously in the center—on which are found some of the choicest gems of literature. Conspicuous amid the display of precious things is a large family Bible, elegantly bound; flanked on the one side by “The Whole Duty of Man,” and on the other by “Woman as she should be.” Then there were Scott, and Milton, and Shakspeare, and Burns; in short, quite a medley of authors, but only the best works of each.

Old Mrs. Wise sat at the head of a sofa, on which slept the little Clarence. Further on, was Minny’s aged grandmother. The other members of the family are also there. They are assembled, as was the custom, twice every day; for it was in that room, the best she had, that Minny tried to honor God by setting up the family altar.

When Murray had taken a cursory survey of the apartment, and Minny detected the look of satisfaction on his face, she advanced to him, and taking his hand said, “Now suffer me to present ye to the auld folks. They like sic little attentions which help to eke out their enjoyments, and God knows old age has but few left.”

“Get up, my bonny bairn. Here is a friend come to see you,” said she, taking up the little Clarence from the sofa.

“Oh, I don’t want to see anybody. Dear aunt Minny, let me hide away here till God takes me home to my mother.”

Murray had taken his seat near him, and when he pronounced those two words—“My son,”—in his peculiarly full, rich, voice—now modulated to a mournful sweet-

ness—the child sprang up, as if electrified, rushed into his arms, threw his own around his neck, and bursting into tears, cried out:

“O that you would let me be your son! Then I would not weary heaven with prayers for death!” There was not a dry eye in the room—even the hard, bleared eyes of eighty winters overflowed.

“Aweel! aweel! That bairn surely keeps the key to the fountain of tears. He never speaks but he unlocks it,” said Minny.

Now a little silvery-sounding bell tinkles, and “mine little hostess” announces tea. When they surround the tea-table, which, with all its appointments, is in strict keeping with that pleasant parlor, and the genius of the place—the little mistress—Dr. Brown, in a calm, manly voice, pronounces the thanksgiving. Their usual cheerful contentedness was much chastened; and that glad, heart-felt happiness, which was the characteristic of that evening meal, was, for the time, o'ercast. Yet were they patient and submissive under it—waiting God's own time to make all bright again.

The child seemed like one resurrected. He looked up into Murray's face wistfully, hung upon every word which fell from his lips, and hoarded them up in the treasure-box of his little memory, as pearls and diamonds. He even smiled, which he had not done since the loss of his mother. The beautiful boy would lay his head on the arm, and gaze up into the face of his new friend, with those deep, dark, Marianna eyes. When Murray would meet that earnest, mournful look, his own would fill with tears.

Oh! it was a touching sight! one which the inhabitants of heaven might behold with mingled feelings of joy and sympathy. That tender, trusting, but melancholy child, by some mysterious influence, impulse, or instinct, clinging to that strong man, who is so sublimely handsome in

sorrow; so grandly beautiful in goodness; so touchingly considerate in kindness!

See with what patient gentleness he tends the “ivy branch” by his side; with what deference he listens to the silly garrulity of old Mrs. Dun; what steadfast attention he gives to Mrs. Wise, whenever she opens her mouth to utter one of her blunt, but sensible truisms; and above all, see with what rapt admiration he catches every syllable which falls from the lips of the good creature at the head of the table. And so it is, every one, even to little Jenny Brown, is charmed with the great man, as she calls him. Still his heart was in none of these things; his thoughts were with the dead and the absent!

“Col. Murray,” said Minny, “we gae back every night to the parlor, to make our family devotions, sae that the auld folks may retire if they see fit. I wad na like to mak an innovation on ony account, but I will show ye to your ain room at once, unless ye wad like to kneel wi’ us around the ‘family altar.’ We want ye to do just as ye like while ye are wi’ us. Imagine, if ye can, that ye are in your ain house.”

The child pulled him into the room ere he could reply, and presently he found himself seated between the little Clarence and his grandmother. Dr. Brown read a chapter in Psalms, after which a hymn—the beautiful lines commencing with “When through the deep waters He cause you to pass,” etc. Then there broke on his astonished ear the full, swelling tones of an organ in a fine prelude. He looked up, and saw the interesting but pensive face of Lucy May bending over the instrument. To this succeeded that touching harmony, that choir of plaintive voices sending up pure incense to God. Murray almost imagined that he could see the graceful wreaths as they ascended to the great white throne. “Surely,” exclaimed he, “of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Minny’s voice was one of great sweetness—clear, full,

and gushing, and generally glad, like a thrush on first finding himself in summer bowers after the horrors of a long winter. Clarence possessed wonderful vocal powers, which was one great cause of his popularity on the stage.

Now the hymn is ended, the prayer is over — they rise from their knees, and the adieu for the night have passed. When they were left alone — Minny, Dr. Brown, and Murray — the latter said, with emotion, “ My friends, I thank you for this evening, which has done me good ; it has taught me a very important lesson. While sitting there listening to your heartfelt devotion, feeling all the time like an interloper who had no lot nor part in such holy things, the conviction was forced on me that there is no happiness save in the discharge of duty — no safety but in the friendship of Christ, no security but in the protection of God.”

“ That’s all, sir ! Seek first the kingdom, then all things shall be added unto you. And, dear friend, it’s na sae hard to find either. If you really do wish to seek it, God will furnish a lamp to your way, and a guide to your feet.”

“ But Mrs. Brown, the doctors, and theologic writers do not make it so easy.”

“ Ah ! never think o’ them now. I can tell you o’ an easier way to gang. Come at once to the blessed Jesus ; do not suffer yourself to think him so far off. Do not stand aloof and cry ‘ O that I could find him ! ’ or ‘ Who will ascend up into heaven to bring Christ down ! ’ He is here now in this room with pitying ears, anxious to help us. So will he go with ye, to your ain chamber ; still waiting to catch the first words from the humble, penitent heart. ‘ God be merciful to me a sinner ! ’ This is enough, if the heart is right.”

Murray shakes his head, and adds, “ Ah ! But it is not so easy to get the heart right.”

"Ye canna do it yourself. Ye maun invoke the Holy Spirit to help ye do even your ain part. If ye have wrunged ony one, make restitution ; 'Cease to do evil, and learn to do well ;' then keep the commandments, tak' up the cross and follow him."

Dr. Brown is called out, and they are left alone. He then inquires of Minny about the events that had transpired during his absence. The elopement of the woman who was so near being his wife, excites neither vexation nor surprise. But when Minny tells him that the general verdict is that he perished in the flames, he volunteers to tell the good creature the story.

After making her acquainted with such facts as the reader already knows, up to his rushing into the fire, he begins : "When I had entered the house, I could not see a yard before me ; all was smoke, and flame, and falling cinders. I forced my way into the rooms on the right, but finding no one there, I essayed to do the same on the left. All now was one mass of flame. Well knowing that no creature could live in that fierce element, I sped on to another apartment which in sheer desperation I would have entered, and of course perished ; but some one jerked me up as though I had been no heavier than the little Clarence there, and carried me from the place. Not a second after, the roof fell in, amid the yells and shrieks of the populace. My hat had been stricken off, and the pain I suffered from burnt eyes and skin for awhile, was so intense that I lost all thought of what was passing. In fact, I think I must have swooned.

"When I revived, I found myself in a small, neat room, lying on a bed whose appointments made me think of a snow-bank. Murdoch sat by me, applying some soothing applications to my wounds, and a tall, graceful girl passed about the room, engaged in making other preparations. The room was cool and fragrant. But, strange to tell,

there was not a window in it. A mellow light issued from a perfumed lamp, and I heard at no great distance the music of the feathered songsters. I imagined myself to be in some grotto, and but for the matter of fact Night Watch sitting there, I should have taken it for a fairy place, and that slight girl for the divinity. My face was covered with plasters, my hands salved over and bound up, my feet poulticed. I looked at Murdoch, who seemed to have escaped almost unscathed.

"I remembered being borne from the burning house, and seeing that a small portion of those black locks were missing, and his luxuriant whiskers slightly scorched, I immediately ascribed my salvation to his timely aid. I asked him for water, and found that I could scarcely speak, my mouth and throat were both so much inflamed. The girl advanced and gave me a cooling draught, which was instantaneous in its soothing influence.

"Then I closed my eyes, and perhaps slept; I know not, but whatever state it was, I found it entrancing. A delicious repose stole over my senses. I felt unequal to the least exertion, either mental or physical. I lay there with my eyes slightly open, if I did not dream; and thought I saw the same graceful figure flitting before me, appearing to my excited fancy marvelously beautiful. She applied other bandages and plasters to my hands, after having laved them in a cooling lotion. Then stole over my senses the most mellifluous sounds; soft and faint at first, as if at a distance; then swelling gradually, until they reached a louder strain. A voice that surely could not have been earthly, sang the following lines, which were so thrilling in their pathos and peculiar applicability, that I knew they were improvised. I held my breath lest I should interrupt the sound which I soon got to think was the music of the spheres. O that I could have listened forever.

Sleep, sleep, poor, weary, broken man !
Nor let thy mind stray hence again ;
Thou hast done all, performed thy duty ;
None could do more in cause of beauty.

See how thy hands are scorch'd and mangled,
Thy face so blur'd, thy locks so tangled,
Thy very limbs are stiff and sore ;
Then take thy rest, and toss no more.

Come, yield thee now to dreams of gladness ;
Hope points the way, then cast off sadness —
She whom thou lov'st may yet be thine ;
Think, think of this, Oh, bliss divine.

And then the strain died away, and with it passed all memory of pain, sin, and sorrow. I seemed to have been transported to elysian fields and fairy bowers, where nothing ruder than the soft sighing of the breeze through the myrtle and acacia groves could reach me. I felt my face fanned by the zephyr's wing, as nectar exhaled from the overhanging boughs of the fragrant jessamine.

"I know not how long I remained in this state, but when I roused up the vision did not pass away. I beheld there by my side, the most miraculously beautiful woman I had ever seen, save one," and his head dropped on his breast. When he raised it, a tear glistened on the lid. "Her eyes were large and lustrous, and dark as night, yet full of light and love. They shone on me with a mild compassion. She was not so fair as my lost Marianna, being what in these climes we call a brilliant brunette. Her features were finely molded and very expressive. Her mouth — O it is folly for me to attempt description. Just fancy, as I did, that an angel sat there fanning me with her wings. I lay and gazed at her, as she produced that gentle undulation of the balmy atmosphere with one of those large oriental fans, which it would take a clerk's salary to purchase.

"Seeing me look so steadfastly at her, she leaned over and asked me if I wanted anything. Oh! how soothing was that sweet voice to my lonely heart! I was still inclined to be feverish, and the only trouble of which I was conscious, was an unappeasable thirst. I asked her again for water. She gave me ice-lemonade; then felt my pulse, and applied wet napkins to my head and breast. She placed that little soft hand on my heart, and seemed to count its beatings. I know not that its pulse was quickened under the pressure of that hand on the bare surface; but I know it made me think of *her*—of my own beautiful one. I then caught that hand between both of mine, and entreated her, if she had any pity in her soul, to tell me where I could find *her*? if she still lived? or whether she had perished in the flames ere I could reach her?

"She stooped down and kissed my forehead as she said, 'My friend, I can not tell thee much, now. She was saved, and lives; I may not say where—I have it not at my option to do so yet; but let this suffice. I have made a vow to suspend my own happiness until she is restored to thee. She shall be. Slight and fragile as thou mayst think me, know that I wield a mighty power; and aided by my coadjutor in works of mercy, I am sometimes invincible. Aye! thou smilest, but no matter. Did I choose to put forth my strength and use my influence, assisted by that most effective and powerful of all engines, the immense wealth of my people, I could shake this city to its foundation. But,' said she (falling from that pitch of enthusiasm to which she seemed unguardedly to have risen), in a subdued voice, 'my friend, the human heart is a most complex thing—a most intricate machine—and must be coaxed, and oiled, and induced, but not made to do. Be patient, and I call father Jacob and all the Patriarchs to witness my vow, that, if life lasts me, I will unravel this mystery—at all events, I will restore to you

that unfortunate lady. My own happiness, as I have said—that for which I have waited since my childhood—is kept in abeyance until your cup is full. I have sworn it.'

"In my madness, and drunk with revived hopes, as well as the overwhelming admiration for the heavenly creature by my side, I started up in bed and caught her to my breast—imprinting kiss after kiss on her unresisting lips. Then becoming exhausted with effort and excitement, I fell back on my pillow, panting and almost fainting. When I opened my eyes, she was gone. I knew not how to address her, else would I have given my remaining strength to the winds in calling on her name.

"My thirst now became consuming, and I roared in agony for drink. In tossing about I chanced to look at the little table. I found there iced wines and lemonades, as well as cold water. I drank, and then the same rich and mellow strain of music lulled me to rest.

"When I awoke from that natural sleep, I was refreshed, and would have risen and dressed myself, but my feet were still poulticed, and when I sat up, I found my head grew dizzy. Presently a sound like a sliding panel, startled me; a place opened in what had appeared to me to be a solid wall. Murdoch and my enchantress came in together. She was now dressed most sweetly, in a splendidly wrought India muslin robe; her arms and neck were bare, and beautifully plump and round, as those of infancy. She wore a necklace, bracelets, and girdle, all of the finest diamonds. Her black hair fell in graceful ringlets to her waist. She was leaning on Murdoch's arm, and looking up into his face, in a loving, confiding manner. When they approached me I felt my face flush, and I thought I saw an answering suffusion on hers.

"Murdoch, who is the best man in the world, aided by the lady, opened my wounds, some of which he said were quite healed. Then applying some lubricating liniment

to others, bound them up again. On being asked how I felt, I answered, 'Like a new creature, and quite able to get up.' He replied, 'Yes, after a bit; now take something to eat.' A large waiter containing delicate and nutricious viands, but nothing prepared as I had ever seen it before, was placed on the table.

"When I had eaten, I asked Murdoch of the time. He said, 'It is just dark.' 'Dark,' cried I, 'it must be near day; it seems longer than that since we came in.' 'Yes,' replied he, smiling dryly, 'it is now more than three days.' 'Three days,' exclaimed I; 'it is but one night; one short and beautiful night.' I looked at the lady. She came to me, took my hand. 'Now, my friend, I hope thou art refreshed, since thou hast slept' 'Yes; but my bright, my beautiful, my charming one, you must tell me'— I was startled by a dark, lowering cloud, which overspread the usually ingenuous and handsome face of the Night Watch. I was appalled; and looking inquiringly at the girl, I stopped speaking. She smiled sadly, and said, 'Alas! this is one of the evils of my life! I am kept busy to suppress the "Green-eyed Monster," in more instances than one. But go on, sir.'

"'Murdoch, my good friend,' said I, 'come sit down by me.' I placed her little hand in his. 'Now tell me who is this kind angel who with yourself is laying me under such mighty obligations? Tell me your name, sweet lady?' 'Thou wilt know it soon; the time has not yet come,' said she. 'Well, then, tell me, both of you, why this kindly interest for a stranger? why have you lavished this tender care on me?' 'Partly from early education, which taught me to feel it a duty incumbent on me to relieve suffering wherever I meet it, more especially of the stranger within our gates; partly with the hope of making some restitution to thee for wrongs done by one, who though despised and contemned by your race, and in some measure justly so, is still dear to me; but above all,

for the interest I feel in that good, pure, gentle, and beautiful lady; and last, and most of all, would I save those grey hairs another crime.' 'Lady, you speak in enigmas; will you not explain?' 'I can not, yet. Ask me no further. We are doing all we can for thee. Murdoch, do thine errand.' And she vanished.

"He then informed me of the illness of my mother, telling me he had just learned from the doctor that she would not live through the night. I immediately rose, and with his assistance dressed myself. When he saw that I was ready to leave he came up to me and said with some confusion, 'Col. Murray, you are in the Jews' Quarter. And you know they have been in this place, as everywhere, a reviled and abused people; though not hunted like wild beasts, as they are in some countries, for acts which, in the Christian, passes for peccadilloes, but in the Jew become crime. A body of these have formed themselves into a confederacy, and have built up for their present sojourn, this street. The better for security, they keep up this mystery and gloomy secrecy. No Christian has ever left these walls exactly as he came. Your being here is unknown to all save the girl and myself. It is usual (if permitted to leave the place at all) to go forth either blindfolded, or led out during the night when darkness covers the earth. It is different with you. Your simple word, that you will observe nothing; or if you do, that you will not use it for the detriment of the inhabitants, is sufficient. I leave it to your own honor. I will not even ask a promise.'

"'Ah! think you,' I cried, 'I could sacrifice those who have saved and nursed me, to an abstract principle of good? I hope your heart does not harbor a doubt of me?' He added quickly, 'Say no more; I do not suspect.' And so we left by some curious, winding, stairway. After we reached the street, which seemed to be at least a mile from the top, without any other incident, I got home at midnight, as you know."

"Now, my friend, you must advise me as to the best course. My mother told me that I should seek her of 'Old Faggot the Jew.' The girl pledged herself to restore her to me. Had I better wait for the fulfillment of that pledge, or tempt the cupidity of the old extortioner, by offering a ransom?"

Dr. Brown approved of the last plan, but Minny opposed it. She thought Murdoch and the girl would bring all things to light, if left alone. Moreover, she feared Myra would be hurt, if they gave the affair any publicity.

"There is, sir, a stronger reason for that incognita than ye wot of." Then going to a small cabinet which stood in the corner, she took from it a roll of papers. "If ye will tak' the trouble to read this, ye can then see what cause that puir body had for mourning and greeting sae much. She gave it to me the night she received your letter. Ah! that letter came very near killing the puir body." But Murray, feeling quite innocent of all design to wound, did not inquire into the cause; supposing that Minny meant only, that she was greatly agitated by receiving his communication.

Dr. Brown now came in, and looking at his watch, informed them that it was long after midnight. Said he must interrupt any further conversation for the present; that it was all important for Murray to rest. So he laid his commands on him to retire at once. He then attempted to take the manuscript from him, and chided Minny for being so thoughtless.

But when the poor, nervous man, saw that he was to be left in solitude, he entreated Mrs. Brown to sit with him while he read, declaring it was out of the question to think of sleep in his frame of mind. That dear little embodiment of obligingness had never learned the art of saying no, consequently she passed into her room for a

moment, said a few words to her husband, which were satisfactory, and returned to Col. Murray.

They seated themselves by the large lamp, and he commenced the journal. It had been written at different times, with a view more to relieve her pent up feelings, than with any ulterior object. In many places the paper was blotted, and sometimes defaced, as if scalding tears had been sprinkled over its pages. Toward day, Minny was called to her own room, and Murray retired to his, but not to sleep.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE JOURNAL.—THE FAR PAST RECALLED.

“ ‘Twas pretty, though a plague,
To see him every hour: to sit and draw
His arch’d brows, his hawking eye, his curls,
On our heart’s table.”

IN childhood, I never knew anything of happiness, other than such as was imparted to me by the plaintive, tender caresses of an invalid mother. I never dreamed of joy, felt gladness, or experienced delight save by association with my little cousin, Charles Conrad Murray. It would be a vain and idle task to endeavor to make any one comprehend how I loved that boy, or cherished that mother. They constituted the whole world of enjoyment to me, which was bounded by my desire to please them.

I was an only child; my parents had been married seven years when I was born. This was a long season of anxious sadness to my mother, and of irascibility, combined with a corroding dissatisfaction on the part of my father; for he was for some family interest feverishly anxious to have male issue. He became estranged from his wife, left home, plunged into pleasures, which led to dissipation; sought other firesides, to the total neglect of his own; became, as I was told by my nurse, greatly enamored of another lady.

This honest creature had taken care of me from my birth. She almost fancied that I belonged to her. She loved and pitied my mother, and most cordially disliked my father; therefore took every opportunity to resent his

neglect of us. She was a single-minded and upright woman, did what she believed to be her duty, in defiance of all obstacles and discouragements. She conceived the erroneous notion that it was her duty to keep me informed of all those grievances which tended to increase the instinctive dread and distrust I had of my father, as well as the tender devotion I felt for my mother.

During my babyhood, my cousin Conrad was my constant attendant. Like me, he had no companions at home, no playmates, and was left much to the care of the servants. His father was first cousin to my mother, and as long as he lived, was her devoted friend. He died soon after my parents were married, and before the birth of his son. His wife had been a dashing belle and great beauty. She was besides, shrewd, diplomatic, and artful ; full of all sort of finesse. She was never known to yield to feeling but once throughout her whole life. With her, affection, virtue, and all domestic duties were made subordinate to worldly ambition and a feeling of revenge. Into these two evil passions were submerged all gentler emotions, and every impulse of good.

The one grand passion of her life was deep, intense, ungovernable love for Doctor Glencoe, my father. I know not whether he reciprocated it, but my family chronicles state that he preferred my mother, who was the antithesis of the fashionable beauty, and the very antipodes of my vain, worldly father. But she had one possession, immense wealth, which if she had been blessed, or cursed, with the one-hundredth part of their "cleverness," could have made them vassals to her, instead of despots over her, as they were. But my mother was soft, gentle, and yielding, and seemed fitted only for the domestic sphere of affectionate wife and tender mother. Alas ! she met no response in the first relation ; in the last, God is my final judge, but my own heart acquits me of all blame.

My first vivid impressions were, that I was very happy, very much blessed in having that dear mother, sweet little cousin, and good old nurse. My cousin was a spirited little man, a very high-toned gentleman, for his years. Yet to my mother and myself he was as bland as the sweet breath of flowers, and as beautiful as the face of nature—even as much so as my own little Clarence. (Here the paper was blistered with tears.)

He was in the habit of coming over every morning to read to my mother. Sometimes he would stand by her bedside and fan her, while I would learn a little lesson. Then in the richest voice in the world he would say, "Now, cousin Myra (my mother's name), I will hear pet's lesson." So day after day this scene of perfect love and trust was enacted in the chamber of the suffering, but uncomplaining invalid. At last we got to watch for his coming, and our hearts learned to bound, while gladness sparkled up from the depths of that sick, oppressed soul, and mine leaped with joy, and sprang to meet him as to its home. Then I would rush into his arms, and almost smother him with kisses. My mother looked on and smiled her approbation, while a faint "God bless you, my children," would escape her.

There arise before me now visions of my childhood, so real that I seem to live over that "auld lang syne." Now I am seven years old and he is twelve. Neither one of us has been sent to school. His mother is quite absorbed in the dissipations of the place, a large commercial city, and very fashionable withal; the only aristocracy being a monied one. Mrs. Murray, as I have said before, lacked means to carry out her splendid projects of grandeur, so essential to the gratification of her burning thirst to be the leader of *ton*. It seems my father was her adviser and abettor in all those schemes of self-aggrandizement.

There was nothing which they would not have done, no sacrifice was too great to be made, in order to compass their

ends. My old nurse used to say to me ‘Dear child, they would sell you both—poor little lambs—to the soul drivers, for fifty thousand dollars, provided they could keep it a secret; then they’d divide it atween ’em.’ This woman was a mulatto, and extremely good-looking for a negro; had very mild, benevolent features; I can never forget her; she is linked in my memory with the only days of sunshine I ever knew, and the only other two beings whom I have ever loved. When a girl herself, she had carried my mother about in her arms, and now she is her friend and companion, and oftentimes her only solace. She divides this mighty love between myself and mother, and at this time lavishes as much care and attention on me, as she had done heretofore on her.

Still, this generous-hearted negress had her faults: she was more loving than discreet or discriminating. I owe it to her early influence, that I am inclined to suspect all great professions of friendship; to look for hollowness or something worse beneath all beautiful exteriors; to fear, that every bright, smooth surface, if not quite transparent, conceals a turbid under-current. Whether she had ever experienced the mildew of hope or the blight of affection, I know not; but there was a tide of bitterness ever surging up, which oftentimes engulfed the otherwise placid stream of her life. Conrad, as well as myself, honored and loved this woman.

I had forgotten to state, that Mrs. Murray, in her own total neglect of her son, had provided a private tutor for him—a poor relation, who was good, and moral, and virtuous. Thanks to him for the solid foundation on which was afterward reared that beautiful superstructure.

About this time, when I am nine years old and my cousin is sixteen, a great change is taking place in our household. My father is seized with a sudden concern about my mother’s health. He comes, “Oh, strange to tell,” to see her sometimes. On one of these occasions,

affects to feel anxious about her; places his finger on her pulse, and tells her she is feverish. In a kind voice, regrets that she will exert herself, and thus put forth her strength to her own injury, about her daughter. (He always spoke of me thus.) That the superintending the education of such a willful girl must be a great tax, and would prove too much for her feeble frame.

During this colloquy, my nurse, cousin, and myself were sitting behind a large screen which my mother kept before the oriel window to break the light from her eyes, which were weak, I think, from much weeping. Nurse had given the sign for silence, and in an instant we became as mute as the chairs on which we sat. My father continued to speak, and nurse to curl her lip in scorn.

"Myra, my love, indeed you over-task yourself with those two children. That boy of Mrs. Murray is always here, and in fact seems to share your fondness equally with your own little girl. Now Mrs. Murray is a woman whom I do not like. She is all for self; I do not think she should impose this trouble on you merely to allow herself more latitude for frivolity, and because the lad's father was your cousin, and perchance a *cidevant* lover."

He said this with acrimony; for notwithstanding he did not love my mother himself, he was jealous by nature, and could not endure that any one else should love her. His only feeling for us both was that of the tyrant for the victim, the master for the slave. We were his, and none must meddle: he must do with us as seemeth him best, and none must pluck us out of his hands. As to myself, my position with my parent was truly unfortunate; he never forgave me, from the moment of my birth up to the present time, "for not being a boy." I committed the unpardonable sin in this first *act*, and was therefore doomed to bear his everlasting displeasure.

It was in vain that my mother declared herself able to proceed with the same course; in vain that she protested

against any innovation, and assured him that the pleasure she felt in imparting instruction to me, and in the companionship of her little cousin Charles, were the greatest sources of enjoyment left her. She wept, and sobbed, and finally became ill. Then he left, with an awful imprecation on everything. As soon as he was gone, we both ran to the bedside of my poor mother, and blended our protestations of love and duty, with our lamentations for her sorrows.

Much to our surprise my father returned; both hands full of nostrums. Mrs. Murray was with him. On seeing us, he looked annoyed, and there was an angry rebuke ready on his tongue; but when she said, "Why, Conrad, what are you doing here in a lady's bed-room, at such a time as this?" the scowl faded from his face, and he stopped to listen to the oracle from whence he drew his inspiration.

My cousin had laid my mother's hand down, and speaking up boldly, dared to say to his imperious mother, "Madam, I am here to aid my little cousin Anna, in her efforts to bring her poor mother to life: for by heavens! she is fretted out of it." And he gave an angry, defiant glance at my father.

"Leave the room, sir," said his autocratic mother.

"No, my dear Madam," said my diplomatic father, smiling blandly on her, and turning condescendingly to my cousin, as he placed his hand on his head, "let him remain. My dear wife is very fond of her little cousin, and I assure you it does us all good to have him with us. Besides I think, from present symptoms, he inclines to be a disciple of Esculapius, and will doubtless take his first lesson with his cousin John."

The boy jumped away from him, throwing his hand violently off, and, with flashing eyes and quivering lips, said:

"Sir I demand an explanation of this taunting insult."

He stood in a menacing attitude, while his ashen face, rigid features, and stern, statuesque figure expressed intensified anger. He had heard my father's conversation with my mother, and young as he was, he was the embodiment of honor, candor, and truth.

"Leave the room, I say, sir!" The boy did not stir.

The red spot is on the lady's cheek, and she bites her lip until the blood shows on her teeth; but she controls herself while she adds, "Charles Conrad Murray, I bade you leave this room. Your preceptor is waiting for you, while you waste your time in silly dalliance with that weak little girl, and her worse than imbecile mother." He looked at me deprecatingly, and then threw a glance of boundless pity on the invalid, and left the room.

The patient soon revived—for my father was a prompt, skillful, and efficient practitioner. Then the two conspirators sat down there by the bedside of my poor, weak, sick, and confiding mother; and ere they left, she was willing to believe that that woman, with the oily tongue, and Siren voice, was the best friend she had in the world; and that it was her great misfortune, and not my father's fault, that he did not love her; and so she yielded to that drug, administered to both body and mind, and fell asleep, sweetly and soundly, never doubting or suspecting.

"Molly, take that malapert girl to her room, and do not let her leave it until I give my permission," said Doctor Glencoe.

When we were there and the door closed, the good creature threw herself into a chair, and taking me in her arms, burst into tears. Her sobs were varied by such interjections as the following: "Poor Miss Myra! she trust everybody! Anybody can fool that dear cretur! I'm that mad and sorry, too, that I can't hardly breathe the breath of life! Thar they is, setting thar by the poor thing, plotting, plotting! And they want to begin on this

child. (Then she presses me violently to her bosom—well-nigh crushing every bone in my body.) But they shan't! I'll—I'll watch 'em! I'll head 'em this time! Old Molly Wise didn't live with her young mistress thirty years or more, and with her father all her lifetime, to let neither one nor the t'other of his offsprings fall into the hands of the cruel fowler, nor the Witch of Nendor, neither. She didn't, that! No, I'll save this one—I will! Ha! ha! ha! He say he don't like that woman! I wonder ef he did fool poor Miss Myra that away?"

I looked up into her face, I suppose with amazement; for, with an impatient gesture, she said, "What you look at me that away for, child? What you want?"

"Aunt Molly, you don't think my father would tell his wife a story, do you? He would not do such a base thing."

"Story! bless God! call things by thar right name; call it lie. Yes, he will tell her lie, and do any thing else, so that he can blind her eye against the wiles of that woman."

"Why, does papa love her more than he loves mamma?"

"Yes, honey, else he wouldn't love her much."

"Oh! Aunt Molly, tell me why? why does he love her more than he does my gentle, sweet mother? Is it because she is dashing and splendid looking—and—"

"Yes, lamb, all that, and because she's a snake, and can charm everybody she chooses; and because your mother is innocent and pure, and child-like, and loving, and can't head 'em; but above all, because she's sick, because she's sick!" and the faithful slave almost shrieked out the last words; so great was her indignation against them, and so strong the feeling of compassion for my mother.

"Poor dear mamma!" cried I; "may God help her, then! If what you say be true, she will need it." And I crept from her arms, and laid me down on the carpet, and cried myself to sleep.

When I awoke it was almost night, and in that room nearly dark; Aunt Molly sat nodding in her chair. I think I see her now, with her brown calico dress on, and white apron, with blue and yellow madras handerchief on her head. I shook her, until she awoke; then told her I was hungry. "Poor child! He order me to keep you in this room tell he call you! Well! honey, Aunt Molly is nigger, she 'bleege to obey orders if she loose her life by it. She been do that all her lifetime. But bless God! that call aint come yit. Dinner bell ring, then tea bell sound, and still that call aint come."

A very lady-like tap at the door, Molly opens it, and Mrs. Murray enters, looking flushed and excited. "Good heavens, Molly! what do you mean by not bringing the girl to see her mother for so long, and to the table?"

"Humph! I obey orders, mam; that's what I mean." "Surely you were not so silly as to understand Dr. Glen-coe literally? Why, he did not mean what he said at all."

"Yes, mam, I is jest that silly, and being a literal 'oman, I thought he did mean ezactly what he did say. But I suppose by this time there be no longer any reason to keep us out of the way any more. I hope he feels better under it all." This was said with the look and voice of concentrated sarcasm.

Mrs. Murray's beautiful face flushed up, and I saw hate blaze in her eyes; but she sat down and began to talk very mildly, and in a short time the surface was as smooth as ever. She smiled sweetly on Molly and said, "Ah! nurse, on account of your many good qualities, and in view of your tried fidelity to our family, your tongue is a licensed one. Here, Molly, take this *douceur* and make a little feast to compensate for the loss of your dinner." She reached out a piece of gold coin, and, much to my grief and mortification, Molly received it.

I have remarked one thing with regard to our slaves. Let them be ever so true and faithful in the discharge of

duty, let them even scorn, as they do sometimes, the remotest imputation of dishonesty in stealing, or in all other criminal transactions, still they are open to this temptation. I have known many instances of heroism, self-abnegation, and noble devotion in the slave to his master; yet I have never met one who had the strength of purpose and magnanimity of soul to resist and spurn a bribe.

So this little piece of gold had a very lubricating influence on the before stern feelings of the good, honest (according to the negro standard) Molly. And when the smiling, urbane, and snaky lady said, "Come, my good woman, assist Marianna to dress, and let her come down quickly to tea," she said not a word, but proceeded to obey her.

When Mrs. Murray had left, she gave a little, low whistle, which ended with a sinister sort of chuckle, and wound up by saying, "Well, bless God! I don't reckon the man can help it, and I won't be so hard on him hereafter. I jest does believe that she fascinates him, and gets round him so like a witch, or a fairy, or a serpent, as she does everybody what comes in her way. I 'spect he can't help hisself, and so does whatever she wants him."

"Do you think, Aunt Molly, she employs the same means to win papa that she has used with you, to-night?"

"Oh hush, child! you don't know what you is talking about," and the blood mantled her tawny cheeks, sent there by a feeling of shame, which for a short time had hid itself away in some curtained place of her naturally upright heart. "You'll be jest like all the rest under her thumb in less than no time; then I'll ask you hard questions, too."

I was now ready to descend to the parlor. On passing my mother's room, I ran in to kiss her. I found Conrad there, reading to her. When I took my cousin's hand to lead him down to tea, as I had done almost every day for

the last five years, he withdrew it, and stooping down, kissed my cheek, as he said, "I can not, cousin Anna. I will never set at that man's table again, until he apologizes to me for that insult. I hate him, anyhow. Oh! how I do hate him!"

"I don't like him either," said I; "but I fear I commit a sin when I say so. It is no harm for you, you know, cousin, but he is my father, and all that, and you"—

"Hush! children; I can not listen to you. You distress me greatly. I must never hear such conversation between you, again. Charles, you should teach your little cousin better things."

Another summons called me to the tea-table, where Mrs. Murray presided with great majesty, looking radiant in spirits and beauty.

Now, for the first time, I watched my father; and the conviction entered my soul like an ice-bolt, that what I had heard from my nurse was true. He did indeed seem to be under a spell. I think I never saw him look so happy in my life, and I know he never looked half so handsome.

There were a few other guests present, who seemed much disposed to caress and flatter me; but when one of the gentlemen offered to lead me to the piano, saying, "Come, Miss Glencoe, you must sing me that very beautiful song I heard you play the other evening" (my mother had taught me music on three instruments), and I had taken my seat at the instrument, having run my fingers over the prelude, Mrs. Murray came hurriedly from the hall, and said, "My dear—excuse me, sir," bowing to the gentleman—"your mother wishes to see you for a moment."

"Is she worse?" cried I, starting up, "Is anything the matter?"

"Yes—no—I don't know. She wants to see you; go and see."

I darted up stairs; but ere I reached my mother's room,

I heard Mrs. Murray's loud and rather fine voice in the same song. When I entered, I found all things just as I had left them. Conrad is reading; my mother is very composed, and Aunt Molly is sitting by, nodding. When I asked her why she had sent for me in such haste, she seemed surprised, and said she had not even asked for me. I then related what occurred in the parlor. Nurse sat shaking in her chair. "He! he! he! I told you so; everybody, great and small, must mind that 'oman."

So time passed, and my dear mother grew more feeble every day. In a few months she has become so emaciated that she can scarcely rise from her bed. My cousin is still untiring in his attentions. He also superintends my education. There is no great change in the family during the two years that have glided so quietly away, save that I am sometimes frightened at the strength of my affection for my boy lover. Oh what halcyon days were those! and how joyous they would have been but for that poor, sick, suffering mother. During all this time, she is still the same patient woman, the meek invalid, the resigned Christian. We are sitting in her room to-day, as of yore. I am reciting my lesson to my cousin: my mother is holding a hand of each. My father comes on us suddenly. He frowns darkly on Conrad, then turning to me, said, "Marianna, I have private business with your mother. Take your books to your own room. I don't know whether this young gentleman will choose to follow you there or not, but he really does seem to have the run of this house very completely."

An imploring look toward my cousin from my mother, and a frightened one from me, quelled the storm which was ready to burst over my father's head at the slightest provocation. He kissed her hand (and I think with a feeling of defiance, and a mischievous desire to brave my father on his own premises), threw his arms around my

neck and embraced me with much apparent unction, bowed with mock reverence to Doctor Glencoe, and with a taunting laugh ran out of the room. Nurse drew me along to the aforementioned screen, behind which she ensconced herself, and forced me down by her side.

"Myra," said my father, "I fear you are declining very rapidly. I can no longer delay it. I am resolved to have a lady in the house with you, as a friend and companion; one who can aid you, or take the entire charge of your daughter's education. I hope you will not attempt to resist my commands, when I say that that forward boy, whom I have just sent away, must be banished from this house forever. On no account let me hear of his being admitted to your private room, your *bed-chamber*, again. Why surely, madam, the innate delicacy of your nature slept, when you consented to receive that *young man* here, every day as you lie in bed, undressed, and your daughter, too, present, when she is now also a young woman; at least she is verging toward it."

When I heard this I was seized with a wild, vague sort of fear. I had never thought of our ever being young men and women. My mother was lying with her eyes shut, seeming not to heed him.

"Myra, do you hear me?" said he, slowly, and trembling with anger at the mere possibility of his having spoken so many words in vain. She nodded her head, but did not open her eyes. "Then, remember what I say, Will you?"

"Ah yes! and may God forgive you for saying it, and for thinking of such a thing. There are but few avenues left open to me for enjoyment, now. When you have closed this one, I know not where I shall turn. I fear it is the last."

"Why, you do indeed attach very great importance to the society of this son of your old lover."

"A truce to all nonsense! I have no heart for such folly, and I will not listen to it. State your business simply and succinctly, else leave me alone."

"Hoity, toity! This is a new phase on the face of things. What is in the wind now?"

"Proceed, sir. A worm will turn sometimes, when trod on."

"Aye! And sting, maybe, hey? Wouldst sting thy husband? Ha! ha! ha! Wouldst sting thy loving husband, Myra?"

I struggled in the grasp of the nurse; I burned to confront this hard, cruel father, and demand of him, child as I was, how he dared thus to maltreat my gentle mother. But the woman held me fast, and I was forced to listen.

"Now, there really is no use in all this. I rather think I am master of this establishment; and have very little idea of submitting to dictation, or the least bit of rebellion in my province. I have written for my niece Amanda Glencoe (who about a year since lost her parents), to come and reside with us. I therefore request you to receive her as a relation, and shall require you to make her home as comfortable as possible, in her uncle's house. Are you pleased or displeased with this announcement, madam?"

My mother did not speak.

"Myra, I have asked you a question. Will you do me the honor to answer me now, or must I repeat it?" said my father, angrily.

"I have no power to resist your commands, whether pleasing or otherwise," said his poor wife.

"Then it is settled. And I shall expect you to deport yourself becomingly toward the wealthy, high bred relation of your husband," said my father, with pride.

"When will she arrive, sir?"

"I think in a week or less time. Now promise me, my wife, that you will discard from your presence that insolent boy; I mean young Murray, who is not a fit associate for your daughter."

"I will not promise, sir. I will not do such violence to my nature. I shall not deny myself or my child this innocent enjoyment."

After a few more taunts and angry words from my father, and a firm resistance against his unreasonable exactions from my mother, he left the room.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE JOURNAL—A GIFT.

“THOUGH my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me
To inflict a cureless wound.”

A WEEK passed, and the lady has not come; another has glided by, and she is not here. My mother seems to feel relieved by this respite. She experiences an indefinable sort of dread of my cousin Amanda Glencoe. A foreboding of evil has taken possession of her mind, in view of her becoming an inmate of our house.

One morning, finding her disposed to talk, I said: “Mamma, did you ever see Miss Amanda Glencoe?”

“No, my dear, I have never seen her, and would to God I never could see her.”

“Why, mamma? My dear mother, tell me why? I will not speak of it.”

“Will you not, my love?” said she, kissing me. “I know you are a very good girl, and astonishingly discreet for one so young. I should not fear to tell you anything. First, your father’s relations are very supercilious — very fond of wealth and splendid show. They have never forgiven me, because my fortune was not commensurate to their expectations, which were boundless. This young lady and her brother, though, are themselves, both wealthy. In consequence of many deaths in their immediate family, they have become, I’m told, possessed of an immense estate.”

"Well, mamma, if she is so rich, she may not share that spite toward you with the balance of them."

"Perhaps not, my darling; but I can not feel otherwise than I do. I have known nothing but sorrow and vexation since I first heard the name of Glencoe. I never hear it even now, but a sort of shivering seizes upon me. Would to God you were old enough to change it, my little daughter."

"Mamma, may I ask you a question? You will not be offended?"

"Certainly not. Speak, my love."

"Was not your's a match of affection?"

"On my part, intensely so. But constant bickerings, cross looks, without words; slights, without open neglect; petty persecutions, without cause or reason; all these little things without one overt act of maltreatment, will break down and destroy the most ardent affection; even as the tide against the firmest rock, which has breasted many a storm, by daily surges will wear it away at last. And now, my love, my dear little daughter, your mother has told you the secret of her soul, which is the groundwork of that resignation to the seeming stern decree which calls me away from my child! I have no hope, no confidence, no respect, therefore no love for my husband!" My mother covered her face with her thin, white hands, and remained quite still.

I wept for a long time, then suddenly recollecting what the nurse had told me about my father's infatuation for Mrs. Murray, I looked up quickly.

"Mamma, is there any reason for this behavior on the part of my father, that you know of?"

"Yes, child, perhaps so, I don't know; we will not investigate it. The Glcoes are inconstant by nature. They are wayward, willful, capricious, and jealous, as I too well know. The old lady, your grandmother, is an exception."

"When shall I ever see *her*, mamma?"

"I do not know, child; I wish she were coming instead of this girl. Now call Molly, my dear."

When the nurse came, my mother whispered to her for some time, and I heard the woman say —

"Yes, mam, if there was any way to get to see him; but every servant in the house is ordered to shut the door in his face. He has already been turned twice away by *your* order."

"Oh! what a system of fraud and duplicity is carried on in this house! But, nurse, this only makes the necessity more imperative.

"Molly, I must see that dear boy. I may die suddenly, and ere I do, I wish to commend my child, as if in the hour of death, to his care. When Miss Glencoe is once established here, then will there be no opportunity. I feel that she is to be a spy on this household."

"Ah yes! dear child! I knows that too, and there is no time to lose; the room all put in order, and the Doctor expecting her every minit."

When we left my mother's room, nurse caught me up in her arms, and told me that my mother wanted to give me to my cousin for his little wife, and that she was in great dread lest she should die before she could get to see him. Therefore, she was going to smuggle him up to her room by the private stairway. How strange I felt! I had always claimed my cousin as belonging to myself and mother, and knew that we both loved him as dearly as we did each other, which was much more than we loved ourselves: but I felt now, that I should not feel the same freedom toward him, and knew this would pain him; therefore I dreaded the meeting.

All day the good Aunt Molly was lying in wait. She hung about the street. (Mrs. Murray lived opposite.) She went over to the kitchen, and watched about the premises. In the course of an incidental gossip, she

learned that their young master was in a strange way; that he would not eat; did not sleep; had thrown by his books, and refused to see any one about the house, and that they "raily and sartainly" did "b'lieve that *she* was at the head and foot of the whole of it."

Molly asked carelessly where he was? They told her he was locked up in his room. "Then," said she, rising, "I must see him."

"Aye, gal; ef you gits to see him, you smarter 'an any nigger's bin 'bout dis house lately."

She had gotten almost to his door, when Mrs. Murray came out from an adjoining room, and said, very quietly, "Well, Molly, how are all at home to-day? I hope your poor mistress is better. See here, I have a new recipe for her. Come into my room." And then she kept on talking, in that sweet seductive way which was peculiar to her.

Presently Molly said, "I wish to see Mr. Conrad a minute."

"Yes, I will go and tell him at once; but, poor fellow, he is not well. Something is the matter with his chest, I fear." She returned, and said, still smiling, but now in a would-be plaintive way, "Molly, he begs to be excused to-day, on the score of bad feelings. Is it anything to which I can attend?"

"Oh no, ma'am, jest a little business 'twixt he and me." Susan, the lady's maid, looked at Molly knowingly, and turned up her eyes with a very "Now, did you ever" sort of expression.

The lady then showed the negro out herself, talking rapidly all the time. But this good creature never ceased her vigilance. She resorted to various subterfuges and devices, but they all failed. After a while, Susan came over, and said her mistress never went near her young master's room to deliver Molly's message. Then she was entrusted with one, but that also, like every other expe-

dient, fell to the ground. My mother seemed to grow nervous under these disappointments, and was threatened with severe illness.

Toward night my father came in ; and, after giving her the usual attention from physician to patient, said, " Myra, to-morrow my niece will arrive at mid-day ; I am called into the country. (He had his riding gloves and whip in his hand, and was booted and spurred.) I may not get back in time to introduce you."

" Very well," said she, closing her eyes.

After I had given my mother her tea, and taken my own supper, I seated myself by her bedside with a book, for I had now taken my banished cousin's place. Molly came with her knitting, and dropped down into the low chair in which she always sat, and was preparing for her usual nap.

" O Molly, this would be such a good time to see Conrad."

" Yes indeed, honey, but I don't know now how you gwine to manage. I done try every 'spedient a'ready. But I does think if Miss Pet would jest go right along up stairs, she maybe might catch him; and if so, then my advice is to tell him above board that her mother wants to see him, no matter who hears."

My mother looked at her watch, and said, " Yes, that will do. I will not give you any message or direction, but will trust to chance, and whatever tact you may possess. Throw your cloak on, and let Molly go with you and wait at the street door."

When we reached there, the servant, who was on very good terms with nurse, suffered me to pass without any noise or delay. It was now near nine o'clock. I ran lightly up stairs, looking to the right and left, and everywhere for my cousin. I found Mrs. Murray's confidential maid, Tivvy, fast asleep on her post. She had been placed as sentinel to guard the door. I tapped lightly, but

receiving no invitation to enter, I opened the door and walked into Mrs. Murray's boudoir.

For one moment I was transfixed to the spot. There sat my father at the end of a sofa, with the recumbent form of Mrs. Murray in his arms. At first I thought the lady had fainted, and he was supporting her lifeless body. My first impulse was to scream out for assistance; but when I saw him stoop down and kiss her several times, and heard her murmur some soft, loving words, in which "dear one" was the burden, I at once felt myself growing blind. Whether it was that sort of affection which makes all rabid, venomous things blind, or whether it was the frenzy of anger, I know not, but all things seemed to reel and grow dark before me. I felt if I did not give vent to my feelings I should die instantly. I walked right up to them, and then with an uncontrollable burst of passion, and I fear in a very coarse, loud voice, exclaimed,

"Shame! shame on you! Or are you lost to all shame?" They sprang to their feet, and for one moment stood quite still, looking like two guilty things.

In a short time they recovered. Mrs. Murray was the first to speak. She laughed carelessly. My father seemed to be infuriated. His eyes emitted flames, and I verily believe, had he obeyed that first impulse, he would have torn me to pieces.

"Why, child," said Mrs. Murray, "what is the matter?"

"I am shocked, madam, to find you and my father in such a situation. Shame! shame on you both!"

"Begone! you insolent, despicable little wretch!"

"Silence!" said the siren, in the most imperative voice. He sat down as a slave, or a little child would have done.

"Why, you little fool!" said the lady, "what was it? You saw my head lying on your father's knee. Where is the harm? How often have you lain in your cousin Conrad's arms? You little witch! you have turned his head completely. Your father is my cousin, and as such I love

him. Do you not love your cousin Conrad? Say, does he not sometimes give those little pouting lips a *cousinly* kiss?"

I felt my cheeks glow. I also saw that they watched me closely.

"My father told my mother that he was called to the country," said I.

He would then have spoken, and the angry spot was still on his cheek, and the fiery look in his eye, but when she had said, "your father is my cousin," she had taken her seat by his side again, and now when he would have uttered an angry rejoinder, she put her hand on his arm and spoke for him. "So he is going, still. Do you not see the riding paraphernalia?" pointing to the spurs. "He did but call to see me a moment. I have been indisposed for several days."

"I heard," said I, trembling, stammering, and blushing, "that cousin Conrad was very ill, and—and—I—I"—

"Ah, yes! I understand, and your little loving heart yearns to pour out its sympathy into his no less loving ears."

She rang the bell. When Tivvy entered, rubbing her eyes, she received a furious glance. "Tell Master Conrad to go down to the parlor; I wish to see him there."

She returned shortly, and whispered to her mistress; after which, Mrs. Murray got up, and taking me by the hand, turned to my father and said, "I wish to see you here, one moment, before you ride. Wait for me."

We descended to the parlor, where I found my cousin, at first looking very miserable. He sprang to meet me, saying, "This is indeed a joyful surprise." I hardly think he saw his mother, else he felt more temerity in that presence than anybody else ever did. He clasped me to his breast, and kissed me perhaps fifty times; I don't know precisely, for he left me no breath to count.

Then disengaging myself, I stepped suddenly aside, and he came in contact with Mrs. Murray. He looked sullenly at her, without speaking, bowing coldly.

"My dear Conrad," said she, "Doctor Glencoe and his daughter were sitting with me;" and she turned her expressive eyes on me, which said as plainly as her tongue could have spoken, "Do not contradict me." "He is now called suddenly away to the country; I wish you to see Marianna home. I do not mean to be inhospitable, but, dear children, it is late."

I gave her my hand, Conrad looked sad and dissatisfied. Then, as we left the room, he caught her hand hurriedly, and pressed it to his lips.

"Do not leave poor little Anna to go alone through those long, dark passages. If the servant is not there, go with her up to her mother's room. I'm sure cousin Myra wants to see you by this time."

"Well! if this does not surpass any thing! That is surely the most remarkable woman."

Molly, who was just behind, touched my arm, and I stopped short.

"What? what is it?" eagerly asked my cousin."

"Oh nothing, only I think your mother must be an enchantress. She certainly is the most *fascinating* human being I ever saw."

"Or maybe ever will see," said he, with a deep sigh; "my mother is indeed what you say, cousin Anna. It were better, if she were not quite so charming sometimes."

We were now before my mother's door; but ere Molly opened it, she drew us aside, and said, "Now, children, don't go to talking about nothing in thar, that'll excite your mother. Don't mention Dr. Glencoe's name at all, if you want that poor thing to have any satisfaction with her cousin Charles; what she bin want to see so much. Mind what I say now!" Then she opened the door, and

we passed in. Conrad kissed my mother tenderly, and ere they spoke a word, they both had a hearty cry. He forbore to speak at all of his absence; and when she pressed him to tell the cause, he shook his head and said, "There is no use to advert to it. Dear cousin Myra, let us enjoy the present, without turning to the past or looking to the future."

"My son, it is of the future that I wish to speak, and alas! I fear it must be hurriedly and briefly. To-morrow a lady arrives here, who may be perfection for aught I know, but she belongs to a race, and bears a name which has made my life a blight. I have a presentiment that she is introduced into my family to play the spy on it. This is the reason why I was so importunate with my messages. I have dispatched a great many since I saw you."

"Why, madam, what do you say? I have not received one. The slightest intimation would have brought me to your bedside. Did I ever fail to obey your summons in my life?" Just then Molly cleared her throat in a very significant way, but Conrad cried eagerly, "Go on madam."

"I do not think I have been deceived. These were surely, unmistakable symptoms. Do you not love my dear child, Charles?"

"Oh yes, more than life!" said he, with enthusiasm.

"Then take her, my son. There are no witnesses, save that good, honest creature who sits there dozing; but she is, and ever will be, as true and efficient a friend as you will ever find in this world. But God, who sees you, and hears me, will as surely bring you to judgment, if you are not true to each other."

She had drawn me to him, and now I rested trustingly on his bosom, listening to the impassioned beating of his young heart.

My mother continued: "You are very young, too

young yet; but remember, when the time comes, and you are old enough, she is yours, I having given her to you for your wife. And now, my children, take your last embrace for the night. Kiss me, my son. I can die in peace with such faith as I feel in you both."

My father came while we were at breakfast. He inquired carelessly about my mother, but looked keenly into my face. He seemed to be satisfied by the scrutiny and the answer, for he said no more, but sat sipping his chocolate in a moody, abstracted manner. When I had finished my coffee, I begged him to excuse me; I had my mother's breakfast to prepare. She loved to have that little slice of cold ham, and the one piece of toast brought to her by me. This had been my business, and the greatest pride of my life, ever since I was large enough to raise the waiter.

I was now standing at the window, a carriage stopped at the door, and a stylish lady and gentleman got out. Presently a servant came up. "Doctor Glencoe say, he will like to see little Miss Anna in the parlor right now."

I felt a degree of trepidation, and almost alarm, hitherto unknown to me, under any circumstances. I remembered that nurse carried me to my room, arranged my hair, smoothed my ringlets, which were very dark, and quite long. It was the month of December; and I also recollect that I wore a crimson cashmere dress, and a piece of very fine Vallenciennes lace at the throat. This made up the details of my toilet. When I reached the door, my father met me, and led me up to the stylish lady. I saw an expression of surprise, and the gentleman and lady exchanged looks.

"My daughter—your cousin Amanda—your cousin John Glencoe." The former kissed me courteously. The latter, a very smart, fashionable, rather dandified, medium-sized man, with fine, dark whiskers, hair some lighter, and eyes still a little more so, came forward, took my hand,

kissed my cheek, led me to a seat, and placed himself by me; then, in an easy, well-bred way, commenced talking on indifferent subjects; but I remarked that he never took his eyes from my face.

The lady had thrown off her bonnet and mantle, and was sitting near the cheerful fire, seeming to feel as much at ease, and as entirely at home as if she had been there a year. Great wealth always lends this sort of clever self-possession if not self-sufficiency to its possessors. But these two persons did seem to be well bred. They manifested not the least arrogance or assumption of dignity. Why should they? They were used to opulence, and had enjoyed the homage paid to it all their lives. Besides, they were on most excellent terms with themselves.

Miss Glencoe was not particularly pretty, but was remarkably pleasing. She had gray eyes and dark lashes, fine complexion, with a rich tint on her cheeks, while the glow of good health mantled her face and neck and pervaded every movement. She had fine teeth, and her mouth would have been decidedly pretty, nay beautiful, but for a nervous sort of twitching of the upper lip. The brother also possessed this peculiarity (even in a greater degree), which made you feel doubtful, while looking at him, whether the face was about to relax into a graceful smile, or to contract into a bitter sneer. They resembled each other greatly in all things.

My cousin Amanda wore a black broadcloth riding-dress richly braided. She was in mourning, and her jewels, with all the other appointments of her toilet, were in keeping. Her form was faultless, and like her brother's, medium size.

After she had conversed with my father for some time, with as much self-complacency as affability, she turned to me, and said, "My dear, when your cousin John has caressed those incomparable ringlets long enough, I beg you will do me the favor to go with a message to your mamma?"

I rose at once, very glad of a pretext. The gentleman had become quite too demonstrative of his admiration. "I am ready, cousin," said I, approaching her.

"Then give my love to my aunt, and say to her that I would be glad to come up and greet her if she will receive me."

Soon after, I conducted her to my mother. In a marvelous short time, she had managed to soothe my dear, easy, gentle mamma into a feeling of respect, and those deep-rooted prejudices were being removed. She had also cajoled my nurse into a state of endurance. As to myself, I was ready to fall dead in love with her at once. What a gift is gentle address and urbane manners! Yet I did not feel at all attracted toward my cousin John, although they were alike. I recoiled from all familiarity, and sickened at his protestations of admiration.

After a while, I offered to conduct my cousin to her room, thinking she might wish to dress for dinner.

"No," said she; "if my aunt will suffer me, I will just peep into her mirror." Thus inducing the belief that her personal appearance was a matter of perfect indifference to her.

She asked to have her dressing-case brought, and then I found that she gave the most scrupulous attention to these duties. Every plait of hair, her eyebrows, her complexion—in short, that whole head had undergone a thorough renovation in a few moments. When she turned again toward us, I thought her almost beautiful, so much had she been improved by the mysteries of that toilet case.

On reaching the dining-room, we found Mrs. Murray and my cousin Conrad there. They had both been invited by my father to meet his relatives. After the presentations were over, he offered to hand his niece to the head of the table, but she declined, and begged Mrs. Murray to

take the seat. This simple act of courtesy, so gracefully done, seemed at once to break down that conventional frigidity which always succeeds an introduction at a dinner party. Conrad Murray, I thought, appeared to watch her with a curious but pleased attention. Her great vivacity, the constant play of feature, her bright smile (only marred by that curling upper lip), her ready wit, with that easy flow of conversation, seemed to enchant every one.

Dinner passed off pleasantly. Conrad was about to offer me his arm, as we adjourned to the parlor, when Mrs. Murray, seeing this, called me hurriedly to the window, pretending to point out something. She whispered to me: "My love, take your cousin John's arm. I am anxious that Conrad shall come out of the mopes. So let him hand Miss Glencoe to the parlor. You see this is also due her."

I at once assented. Indeed I was convinced of the propriety of what she said; therefore I turned and laid my hand on Mr. Glencoe's arm, which seemed to please every one present save the one I most desired to please on earth. When I did this—for me, very familiar thing—he looked surprised, and his face flushed; then stepping up to cousin Amanda, he conducted her to the drawing-room. There she enchain'd him to her side by the spell of her charming conversation. Presently he handed her to the piano, and then hung over her while she played; turned the music; asked for song after song; and was so taken up that he seemed to ignore all else in the room. I could stand this no longer, and being bored to death, now, by my cousin John's compliments, I broke away.

"Excuse me, sir, my mother wants me." I ran up stairs, threw myself down by her side, and burst into tears. I wept several minutes before I could tell her.

Then I sobbed out, "O mamma! your fears were, indeed, prophetic. She has taken him from me already! She has charmed him on first sight! He has not spoken to me since she came!"

Just then there was a light tap at the door. Molly opened it. "God bless your sweet soul and face! I'm t-h-a-t glad to see you I don't know what to do with myself! Look a-there! the poor thing's a-dying of jealousy a'ready of the strange woman and her little husband."

Very soon all was explained satisfactorily, and we were once more a very happy trio. Alas! there is always a drawback! Mrs. Murray came tripping into the room without rapping, and Conrad disappeared.

I was never again left alone with my cousin Conrad, but constantly with my cousin John. We had not now met alone for more than a month. I could not understand wherefore; and I was far from feeling reconciled. Yet he appeared cheerful when we met in company, and had never sought an interview that I knew of, offered explanation or apology.

Whenever he came to see my mother, which he did sometimes by her request, sometimes voluntarily, either my father, cousin John, or cousin Amanda was sure to be present. I was in despair. I hated them all by turns. I could not forgive him, that he was so quiescent under this surveillance. I had thought that he would pull the house down over their heads, rather than submit to this system of espionage.

At last, during one of those sittings, he managed to slip a note into my hand. He did this most adroitly for one so unpracticed in artifice. Still I think Miss Glencoe saw it, although her head was turned from us. I ran to my room, locked the door, and falling on my knees, read the following note, which had been scratched off in haste:

"MY DEAR LITTLE WIFE—If I do not get to see you soon, I will either shoot myself or run away. It seems that the members of both families have combined to keep us apart. I can not exist under this state of things. I have waited thus long to see what it would come to ; now I must see you, if at the point of the sword, or the mouth of the pistol. Meet me in the conservatory to-night at twelve o'clock. Bring Molly with you if you choose. Perhaps it would be better, in case of a surprise ; and then you know we are such children (as *our* dear mother said) we may need a guardian. Come when they have all retired. I'm convinced that you wish to see me, my love, and if you fail me, I shall not blame you. But come. God bless my little bride.

C. C. MURRAY."

I put this note into my writing-case, locked it, and hid the key. At the appointed hour, nurse and I stole down quietly to the basement, thence to the garden. In a few moments more, I was resting confidingly and happily on the bosom of the only man I have ever loved. He explained all seeming mysteries. We renewed our vows of love and constancy, and swore that we were more in love with each other than ever, which was swearing to a great deal.

Then my cousin began to plead with me to elope with him, and be married, children as we were ; saying so innocently, "Dear cousin Anna, we will grow old just as fast, and maybe faster if we are married. Then they can not separate us." Nurse cleared her throat disapprovingly. He continued, "I have at last divined their plans, which had all been concocted by your father and my mother before Miss Glencoe and her brother came. The scheme is to have me married to your cousin Amanda, and you to your cousin John, so that the two immense fortunes shall be kept in the family."

He had overheard a conversation the evening before, in which he learned this, and also why we were never permitted to meet. He said he knew matters would grow worse day by day, and presently we would be called on, at least I would, to ratify this engagement with John Glencoe. And then this boy fell on his knees, and entreated me so earnestly to place myself under his protection, to leave home with him at once for this purpose, that aided as he was by the pleadings of my own heart, I think he would have carried his point with me, had it not been for my nurse, who had sat so still that we had forgotten her presence.

"Oh no, bless God! children, I can't not consent to that. I never gwine to give in to that, no how. I jest brought Miss Pet here to talk little while with you, 'cause them clever ones in the house watch over you so close; but I got to carry her back. Bless God! I got to do that thing. Think, honey, of your mother. Could either of you do sich a thing without asking her advice and consent? No, I know you couldn't to save the lifetime of you. And my little lady there, not yet near fourteen years old, and Mr. Conrad not much more."

"Oh, forgive us, nurse!" exclaimed I, "we were crazy; we would not be guilty of such madness, and thus cause you and my darling mother such sorrow."

"Cousin Anna, I do not indorse that statement. I am neither crazy nor mad; nor did I deem you so. I appeal to you, good nurse, is a man mad or crazy because he tries to circumvent his enemies, and wishes to protect his family from oppression by resorting to the best means open to him, to secure his and their happiness? Would you call a man mad or crazy for doing this? Speak, good nurse."

"No, honey, certainly not; no *man* would be to blame for doing sich things, but I can't say so much for *boy*. I can't not say that it is right all the same way for young *boy*."

"What do you mean, old woman?" said he, starting up; "do you mean"—

"Nothing more nor less than what I says, child." And the good-natured creature laughed a little, low titter. Then we consulted together, and it was settled that we would talk it over with my mother, and return at the same hour the next night.

Just at that juncture, when we were feeling so secure, we heard a suppressed sneeze. We all sprang to our feet, and in great consternation looked to the right and left, but of course we could see nothing, as it was quite dark. Molly thought it best that my cousin should not venture into the house, and promised to arrange another meeting with my mother. So we separated.

When I reached my room, I found a large traveling trunk, dressing case, writing desk, etc. And when I looked into my escrutoire for the note, it could not be found.

I had a terrible foreboding of evil, I could not think, I could not weep, I could not even undress myself. I should have sat there gazing at that trunk all night, if my good nurse had not come in to put me to bed.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE JOURNAL.—AN INTRIGUANTE.

“FAREWELL to the few I have left with regret;
May they sometimes recall what I can not forget.”

“At last I know thee, and my soul from all thy acts set free,
Abjures the cold consummate art 'shrined as a soul in thee,
Priestess of falsehood, deeply learned in all heart treachery !”

AT ten o'clock the next morning, I had not left my room ; I had taken no breakfast ; had not slept ; I felt stunned. My father opened the door and came up to me even before I saw him. “Marianna, have you seen your mother, to-day ?”

“I have not, sir ; I have not yet left my room :” and I looked proudly up into his face.

I expected he had come to upbraid me ; and being guiltless of all wrong, I felt defiant, and was prepared to hurl back every reproach and accusation. But not so ; and great was my surprise when, looking at him, I only saw an expression of subdued misery. This, to me, was inconceivably touching. My proud, rebellious feelings were in an instant changed to those of interest, and the most respectful sympathy. I eagerly asked, “Dear sir, what is the matter ? Why did you ask me that question, and why do you look so sorrowful ? I have not heard that my mother is worse. She is not ill—is she, sir ?”

“No ! It is not of her that I would now speak. Listen to me.”

“What is it, then, sir ?” cried I.

"It will avail you nothing to tell you. Words can not help you. Poor deluded child! I pity you, from my inmost soul. Oh! I am forced to pity you. False! false hearted wretch! And so young, so promising, and so handsome!"

I threw myself on my knees; I caught his hand, bowed my head on it, and implored him to explain himself, before I should lose my reason. O my God! I felt my brain reel!

He shook his head mournfully, and laying his hand on mine, said in a voice full of pity, "Alas! I can not! Get up. Your mother is waiting to see you."

[Col. Murray had read poor Myra's Journal up to this point with intense emotion; sometimes so overcome, that he was forced to stop and wipe his eyes. But when he came to this portion of it, he sprang to his feet, exclaiming, "The perfidious monster! Oh! what is it all? For what purpose is this intricate and diabolical woof of treachery woven?" He resumed his seat and read.]

When I went to my mother's room I found her in tears, and before she saw me I heard her exclaim passionately, "I do not believe it! I care not what is said of her, and I care not who says it. I believe her to be as pure as the 'angels in heaven.' I know, and God knows, and I think you all know, that my precious lamb is free from spot or blemish"—

My father went up to her hurriedly, and with a stern look said, "Silence, madam, else you shall not be indulged with this last interview." She sunk back on her pillow, and continued to sob.

Cousin Amanda was hanging tenderly and pityingly over her. And as I sat watching her, I believed her to be then a ministering spirit sent to sustain my mother in this her extremity. Poor dear mamma seemed to think so too, for she turned to her—"Oh, my friend, compassionate me, and intercede with that stern, hard man, your

uncle, to leave me my child, just the little while that I shall be here in this world of woe!"

She whispered for some time to my poor half dead mother, and when she raised her head, her face was streaming with tears. I felt at that moment like falling down and worshiping her. In after years I learned that she possessed some strange power, by which she could induce the lachrymose humor at any moment, without the least feeling, and when her heart was untouched. She came up to my father, who was standing apart, holding me by the hand, and looking very significantly into his face, said, "Uncle, let the child embrace her mother."

I threw myself into the arms of my darling mamma. I vowed most solemnly that I had done no wrong; I assured her that I never dreamed of its being amiss to meet my cousin anywhere and at any time, and that my nurse was only taken for protection by the way to the rendezvous. I was going on to explain further, when she said, "Hush! my love; I know, I understand all. I also know that you were goaded on to commit this little indiscretion; but were one to come from the dead, and tell me that my pet lamb had erred, I would not believe it. Oh no! But they have made this a pretext to tear you from me. You are to be sent away."

My father approached, and shaking my mother rudely, said, "Woman, cease this silly tirade; I am tired of it." She did not seem to heed him, but continued her lamentations. "Oh! when they send her away, tear my poor child away, then will life become a weary waste indeed. This is the last flower left blooming on my solitary pathway! The only sunbeam which ever reaches my frozen heart. Alas!"—

I heard no more. My pitiless father dragged me back to my room, where I found my maid holding my traveling bonnet and mantle.

"Tempy, do your business quickly," said he, and he took his seat to watch the process. That mournful expression had passed from his face, and in its stead was a hard, stern, resolute look. I became sick, unable to think or act; was now perfectly passive in their hands.

When I was dressed in my traveling attire, my father led me to the parlor to take leave of my family. I found there my cousin John and Mrs. Murray. I looked around for my dear Conrad. Then those mysterious words of my father came to my mind. I think I should have fainted, had not Mrs. Murray come to me, and entwining her arms around my waist, embraced me, and at the same time whispered, "My dear, your poor cousin is as wretched as yourself, yet he would be in the street to offer his adieu (these doors have again been closed against him), but he is too ill to rise from his bed."

Strange and inexplicable thing is the human heart. I loved my cousin more than my own soul, and would have died with him, in defense of our attachment; or without him, to prove its truth; or for him, to save him from death, or sorrow, which is worse; yet notwithstanding all this, when I heard he was ill, a thrill of joy ran through my whole frame. Anything but the realization of those dark hints from my father. I would at that moment have preferred to hear of his death, and would have consented to pass a long life in solitude, mourning his loss. But I would have dashed myself to pieces from the first hight with frantic joy, had those insinuations been confirmed.

My cousin Amanda now came into the room and presented me with a small parcel from my mother. She shed a great many tears over me, bade me feel easy about my mother, said she would watch over her as if she were her own parent, and whispered, "Do not be disheartened, *he* shall write to you very soon. Your father is aggrieved, and feels himself dishonored by the last night's transac-

tion, and seems harsh ; but never mind, have a little patience, it will all blow over, and we will have you back very soon."

I almost adored my cousin at the time, and should have told her so, had I not been admonished by that upper lip that there was hollowness in the heart. Oh, that wonderful upper lip ! It kept me at bay, always.

Murray strikes his forehead fiercely, and rising, paces the room in great agitation, as he exclaims, "Great God ! I can scarce believe what my eyes trace on this blotted and anguish-marked paper. I was not ill that morning, I slept in peace, dreaming of elysium. And when I awoke at a late hour, I thought the sun shone more gloriously bright and beautiful, and life itself was fraught with more happiness for me than ever before. Oh, I felt wild with joy ! I thought only of the meeting which I had had, and the one yet in prospective. I found a pitcher of hot lemonade on the hearth, which I drank off with avidity. Soon after, I fell into the most delightful state of drowsiness. My dreams were gorgeous. I think I must have slept two whole days, and now I understand it all. That punch was drugged. When I did awake, I well remember how my head throbbed. Feeling better after taking a bath, I dressed myself with great care, and walked over to Doctor Glencoe's, intending to see Mrs. Glencoe, and I meant, if I could gain her consent, to consummate a speedy and private marriage. I was met at the door by a servant, who handed me a note.

"Doctor Glencoe begs to be excused for declining the honor intended his family this morning by Master Murray. The present calamitous situation of the household can only be ascribed to his fool-hardy pursuit of a child who does not know her own mind, and who, before two weeks more, will be as much in love with her cousin John, or somebody else, as she affected to be with her cousin

Conrad. Doctor Glencoe hopes that *Master Murray* will be equally willing now, with every member of this family, to dissolve all connection, which is only productive of annoyance and misery. Respectfully,

I returned to my room, rang the bell violently. James came, and stood at the door twirling his thumbs.

"Tell me, James, what has been transpiring in this house while I have been lying asleep? and what is the matter over the way?"

"Nothing 'tall aint bin transpiring here, sir, but every-thing is the matter over thar. Tivvy says poor Mrs. Glencoe is 'bout to die, and little Miss Pet, or Miss Anna as you calls her, is gone away in a carriage with Mr. John Glencoe; they do so to get married or something or nother."

I hope God will forgive me! but, without having the least idea of what I was doing, I knocked that stout negro boy down, crying out, "I suffer no one to slander my wife."

In an instant I was by his side on my knees, wiping the blood from his nose with my handkerchief. I also washed his face in my own basin; took him up in my arms and laid him on the sofa; then gave him a little brandy and water. After a while he recovered, and I then learned with horror the preceding facts; but I did not then hear, and I do not think the boy knew, that Marianna had been taken to school.

"Oh!" said Minny, taking his hand, "ye hae been as fierce in your time, as ony *Hielander*—a sort o' Rob Roy; but go on"—

The manuscript is continued, while Minny sits by—

My cousin John is the last one to bid me adieu. When he imprints that unwelcome kiss on my lips, he cries out, "Why, Doctor, my cousin is burning up with fever! She is ill! not able to travel."

"Oh yes!" sighed I, "I am ill—sick almost unto death (bursting into tears), and no one pities me. I shall die, die alone among strangers, and there will be none near to receive my parting words to my mother—and to tell *him* that—that"—

I was not allowed to finish the sentence. I felt myself caught up and placed in the carriage, which drove off. I also thought or dreamed that I lay in *his* arms. I closed my eyes, and yielded myself up to that almost crushing embrace—I knew, nor felt, nor cared for anything more. I presume I slept; yes, slept in peace, like an infant (as I believed), on that adored bosom. I was very languid, and had been so soothed by the gentle caresses which succeeded to the first raptures, that I felt no desire ever to be aroused from the delicious repose. The carriage still drove on with great velocity: and I still dreamed on in blissful ignorance.

Presently the spell was broken by the vibration of a strange voice. I started up in amazement, and cried out wildly, "What! How is this? You here? I thought, Oh! I thought it was—I thought it was! Oh, I am distracted!"

I attempted to open the door; failing in this, I screamed to the driver. He drove on just as before. I then attempted to make my escape through the window of the flying vehicle.

All this time the gentleman sat quite still, perfectly so; all to the twitching of that wonderful upper lip. Now he lays his hand on my arm, and, looking curiously into my face, says, "Marianna, I agree with you; I do believe that you are distracted, or soon will be. Throwing yourself from that window will not be so pleasant; but it will be instant death, if you desire that. What is the matter? Why do you act thus?"

"Oh! tell me, then, why you are here? Where are you

taking me? For what purpose are you hurrying me off thus?"

"I am not hurrying you off, child. It is your father's carriage-driver who is driving us both off; but with no evil intent, I think. I am here only to render you assistance, and to comfort you if possible."

"Where are we going, then?" said I, weeping.

"Do you not know, my cousin? Did your father not tell you?"

"Oh, no! I do not know, unless it be to some dreadful dungeon."

"Strange! most strange! There is something wrong beneath all this mystery! He surely did tell you why you were leaving home?"

"I have told you, cousin John, that he did not."

"Well, you are on your way to the celebrated boarding-school at ——, about two hundred miles distant. When I saw you look so ill as I bade you adieu, and seemed so heart-broken, and found my cold, inflexible uncle was about to send his only child away under the protection of a servant only, my nature revolted at such inhuman treatment. So without a moment's reflection, I jumped into the carriage, and received your fainting form into my arms. For some time I thought you were dead; but that little black imp, who sits there grinning at us, gave me the *sal volatile* which revived you. Yet you did not open your eyes, or seem disposed to rise from your recumbent attitude. And I'm sure I would be the last man in the world to remind you to do so."

My cousin John had never yet spoken one word of his passion to me. It was implied only by his looks of admiration, and his glowing commendations of all I did and said. Neither had he obtruded himself much of late. Still, I could not choose but feel a secret recoil, whenever he came near me. But I was also one of the most grateful

of all God's creatures. Any kindness—the least drop of sympathy—called forth grateful tears. And now, I sat there weeping, with very softened feelings toward Mr. Glencoe.

"God knows, cousin John, I am very much obliged to you; but are you right sure that this was your only motive?" said I, trembling from head to foot, as I beheld his excited and inflamed countenance.

"Certainly, my dear little coz."

"Then why did you hold me in such an energetic embrace?"

"Now, as if any man could help it, much less one who loves you as I do. It must be a being endowed with superhuman strength, to resist such charms; else apathetic."

I moved off to the corner of the carriage. The little maid on the front seat, giggled merrily.

"What are you laughing at, Tempy?" said he. "I tell you it is no laughing matter to be scorned in this way, when I only meant to take care of, and console my sweet little cousin."

"Seeing him look as I thought, mortified, and as he did not approach, my conscience smote me, and I said, with feeling, "Dear cousin John, forgive me. I am more than half crazy with trouble, and quite a fool." I offered my hand, which he took, and drawing off the glove, kissed it; then pressing it tenderly to his bosom, said, "Fear not, little one! I would watch over, and guard the honor of this hand with my life; an you would let me."

Nothing more of consequence occurred on the way. The name of my lover was not mentioned between us. I think, perhaps, he had never heard of my attachment to my cousin. I presume the devisers of that cruel plot had studiously kept it a secret from him. After remaining a day at the school, and during that time saying everything

to comfort and cheer me, which oftentimes produced just the opposite effect, he took an affectionate leave.

I then entered on the duties of the scholastic course, with a leaden heart. Yet I did imbibe instruction, though pretty much as a sponge. I was never behind my classes, oftentimes foremost. I received many letters from home. My cousin Amanda wrote for the whole family. She gave me the news of the domestic, as well as the social circle.

Once when she had gotten through the household details, after telling me that on this occasion she was my mother's deputy in writing, and that she was better, but still feeble, and all that; she went on to say, "Mrs. Murray sends her love to you. Your cousin Conrad also sends his respects. Soon after you left, he was seized with the most unaccountable love of books: he lived in the library, and only saw his mother and his preceptor. But you know, dear child, that such moods do not last long in youth. He is now quite gay; comes over every evening to hear me sing some of your favorite songs, which do not make him so sad as one would think. He oftentimes thinks of your great simplicity, and almost infantile playfulness of disposition. In short, dear little Coz, he seems to feel quite an interest and an affection for you, even as an elder brother or a father. It is really amusing to hear him speak of his early associations with the little Marianna; one would think it had been twenty years ago. My brother chides him sometimes, for still seeming to view you as a child, when he thinks you a most desirable and charming young woman. God bless you.

AMANDA G—.

"Merciful God," exclaimed Murray, taking Minny's hand. "O my dear little woman! where can I expect to find truth and honesty after this? I took that woman to be the incarnation of both. I almost fear to proceed."

"Gae on, gae on, and let us get to the eend o't," said Minny.

The manuscript proceeds: "Six months passed, and still she wrote in the same strain. Then Cousin John wrote; but his was a manly, affectionate effusion. He spoke of my cousin Conrad in terms of cordial praise; regretted to tell me, that he thought him delicate. In fact, that both he and his mother were in poor health, and that Dr. Glencoe had ordered a sea-voyage. He began now to declare his feelings, but with great delicacy.

I had never received a word from under the hand of my cousin Conrad. Sometimes a message through Miss Glencoe, which I always felt to be an insult. In truth, every word I had heard was calculated to wound me.

"Mrs. Brown," said Murray, "I wrote every week, but never received but one reply; which was brief and cutting. It ran thus:

DEAR COUSIN—Your letters, truly, are very fine; but I have no time, therefore no relish, for such things.

Yours, respectfully, ANNA GLENCOE.

Ah! no one can comprehend my sufferings!"

"Read on," said Minny, "else the grey dawn will find us here." He obeys.

A year had passed away, and the vacation occurring, I was permitted to return home. Cousin John came for me. Nothing of consequence transpired by the way. We traveled by railroad and steamboat—therefore were soon at home. Once more I was folded in the arms of my dear mother. We were never left one moment alone. I was not permitted to speak a word to my nurse. No one ever mentioned Conrad's name. I waited two whole days for some one to speak of him. I hoped that I might perchance meet him.

On the third day, I felt I could endure it no longer, and creeping up softly to my mother, I leaned down and whispered to her, "Mamma, why does not my cousin Conrad come to see me?"

Oh, what a wild, frightened look she cast round the room. "Hush! Hush, child! They will tear you from me, again. Do not, if you love your mother and pity her condition, pronounce that name in this house ever, any more. O God! They have made it one of terror to me."

"When did you see him?" said I.

"Oh! hush! never, never, since you left. He does not care for us now."

My father frowned, and said angrily, "Marianna, did you come home only to excite and distress your mother? Are you not satisfied with your work of destruction before you left? We could scarcely keep life in her for many weeks, and now you are trying to do your work over again." I began to weep. My mother looked like a timid, brow-beaten child, who was momentarily expecting punishment.

Miss Glencoe took me by the hand, and leading me into the parlor, bestowed many tender caresses on me, uttered many protestations, and shed many tears; then, in a low, soft voice, said, "My dear, you must not pronounce Conrad Murray's name in the presence of your father. His conduct has been most strange, and his motives past finding out. He has not been to see your poor mother during your whole absence. He and my uncle do not speak, and rumor says he is addressing a very wealthy lady."

I do not know wherefore, but the impulse came on me to look her keenly in the eyes. Well! this smart and brave lady, in all other things, quailed beneath my earnest gaze. I turned away, and shook my head mournfully.

She soon rallied and continued: "As soon as he learned that you were expected home, he immediately left."

"And is he not here now?" asked I.

"No; he went away the very day my brother started for you. This is most unaccountable. I feel indignant at him, and most sincerely compassionate you, and feel vexed at the same time. O that I could infuse some of the Glencoe pride into you! Poor little lamb! as your mother calls you, you inherit all her softness and beauty, with her weakness. You must tear this idol from your heart, my love. Drag it forth; believe me, it is unworthy of such a place. Such genuine, disinterested devotion, is altogether misplaced. Just as well lavish it on the dumb idols of the heathen, for all the return you will ever get."

"I do not think I can go on with these dreadful details. This unsuspected revelation of perfidy makes me sick at heart," said Murray. "I went to that boarding school three times during that year, and each time I was turned away as if by the express order of Marianna.

"The day she left with Mr. John Glencoe, I arrived, one hour after they had departed, and was told by the superintendent, in fact, I saw the letter from her father, which was: "Dear Sir,—I wish you to entrust my daughter to the care of Mr. Glencoe. This, you will see, is no infringement of the rules of propriety, as she will be married to that gentleman at the end of next year." I returned from that place a changed man. All things require to be cared for; every living thing needs encouragement, and so does the heart of man, let him be ever so self-sustaining."

I was quite ready (continued the Journal), at the end of the month, to return to my prison house. I felt I had nothing more to do in the world. And if I could not die, I wished to be buried alive. The school was a Roman Catholic institution. I wished now to become a nun, and

I should have taken the vows at once, but the superior of the neighboring convent discouraged it.

After remaining a whole month without hearing from home, I at last received a short letter from cousin Amanda :

“ DEAR LITTLE COZ — I have only time to say to you that your mother is no worse. I may say, rather better. Your father is also well. They send their regards to you. You must excuse me now, I am called to the drawing-room to see him — I mean, a gentleman has called to spend the evening with me. Well, your cousin Conrad returned soon after you left us. He had passed the interval in New Orleans, and came back with renovated health and spirits. He said he would have returned sooner, but he stopped by the way until you should have left. Not that he dislikes you, my love, but he thinks, and very justly, too, that it would be embarrassing to both, especially to you. Mrs. Murray is ill ; she has had an attack of paralysis, and is so changed that you would not know her. They speak of setting out soon on their tour. God bless you.

“ AMANDA.”

Then she wrote again, and mentioned that my cousin’s health was feeble, and that he and his mother were preparing to leave home for an indefinite time, perhaps forever ; that they had sold out their possessions in the city of —, and that he would be married ere long, etc.

I determined to hazard one letter, let him think of it as he pleased ; let him blame or even hate, so that he did not despise me, I cared not. After many fruitless attempts, much waste of paper and time, much sighing and weeping, I succeeded at last in producing the following incoherent lines :

“ DEAR COUSIN — I care not now what you think, much

less do I value the opinion of the world. You may, if you please, smile disdainfully at this unmaidenly conduct. I know that society would frown on it, and I feel myself that it is indelicate, after so many slights, and such total neglect of me. The world may point scornfully at the woman who would under any circumstances *commence* a correspondence with an estranged lover. But what care I for all this now? I will tell you, while I have the power to do so, ere I shall be driven to some act of desperation. . . . I love you still. Yes, even now, and with the same ardor as when my mother gave me to you, and when you swore so solemnly to love and cherish me to the end of life. But you have changed. *She* tells me, my clever cousin Amanda tells me that you are to be married soon. . . . Well, you could not help it, I suppose. Some persons are constitutionally fickle. I am not; Oh no! just the reverse. Therefore, I am true to you, and shall remain so through time, and maybe through eternity. She says the lady is wealthy; and I infer from what she writes, that this is the allurement. Well, poor, dear cousin! I deplore the hard destiny which drives you to the necessity of sacrificing your affections to your fortunes. You are not married yet, and I can but love you with that same wild, soul-absorbing enthusiasm. When another has taken that place which should have been mine, and it gets to be a sin, then I will not speak of it. Still, I shall remain true to you. Your image is enshrined forevermore in my heart. I do not blush to tell you this. I am proud to avow the truth. . . . I will not ask you to write; I presume you would not like to do so, on '*my account more especially*.' I thank you for your considerate mindfulness of my feelings heretofore. O God! how can I say farewell? And now a long and final adieu.

ANNA."

"Oh, had I but received this letter!" said Murray, "my

happiness had not been wrecked, as now. I wrote to that dear child so often, and grieved over her apparent coldness, so deeply lamented her estrangement! I only received those two lines. But what next?"

I had not long to wait for a response to my letter. It ran thus, and it was in his handwriting. My heart could attest to it :

"DEAR MARIANNA: I am astonished and mortified. Why do you act thus? Why write thus? Why indulge this strain of pathos? Surely, your own good sense ought to teach you that such things between us now, are entirely out of place and highly improper. Rumor says, that you are to be married to your cousin John. I believe her ladyship this time, though generally her thousand tongues are busy in propagating falsehood. But this one time I think she speaks truly. At least, I hope so; else the close intimacy, the affectionate caressing on the highway—in carriages, with *unlowered* blinds—would be considered rather an unseemly exhibition.

"I presume you have not forgotten the time when you were so benevolent as to exalt me to the third heavens over night, and the next day throw yourself into the arms of another lover-cousin—wrapping his soul, no doubt, in elysium. For you can do such things, little coz. Your preternatural beauty, and that exquisitely bewitching simplicity, that child-like sportiveness of manner, are enough to turn a stronger head than mine—or his, I presume, when near you. When we are both married, and well married, as report says we shall be; we may then meet and laugh over these details and dates in young love's calendar. God bless you, cousin Anna.

"C. C. MURRAY.

"P. S. My mother's health is wretched. I leave in a week for Europe."

When I had finished reading this letter, a wild dizziness seized upon me; then a numbness, which ended in an attack of catalepsy. I could neither speak, move, nor understand. I could see and hear, but all feeling had gone. Every mental faculty was suspended, and I sat there holding the letter before my eyes. I had lost all computation of time.

The next morning, when the maid came into the room, she found me sitting there, with my stony eyes fixed on the paper as if still reading. I was very pale, and quite cold; the girl thought I was dead; she shrieked out in affright, which brought the physician, the superintendent, and his wife to the room. Very prompt and efficient means were used. I soon revived, and was restored in a week to my wonted health.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE JOURNAL—A STUNNING ANNOUNCEMENT.

“SLOWLY folding, how she lingered,
O'er the words their hands had traced,
Though the plashing drops had fallen,
And the faint lines half effaced.”

TIME wore on in the same tread-mill way as ever. I did not hear from home for a long time. I had but one feeling and one interest left; that was to know whether my mother lived, and to see her once more. I went through my tasks and duties mechanically. I never failed in a lesson; I never committed a fault worthy of reprehension, and on the other hand, I never performed an act deserving commendation. It was thus I remained a sort of link between animate and inanimate nature. I neither loved nor hated, felt neither joy nor sorrow, pleasure nor pain. I had no aspirations—no expectations, no hopes.

One day my maid brought me a number of letters. I laid them listlessly down by my side. She handed me one; I opened it, looked at the date; it was old; the signature—John Glencoe: I laid it down. She gave me another; it was also from Mr. Glencoe. I laid *that* down. The next was in a neat, lady-like hand. I opened it; the signature was a strange one—Carolyn somebody—I did not wait to see. It commenced in this way:

“DEAR YOUNG LADY:—I am sitting by your dear mother's bedside, and writing as she dictates. She is feeble, but better. ‘Yes, darling child, I am, indeed, better; have been gradually improving ever since Miss

Amanda Glencoe left. I can not tell why, but I feel a great relief in that young lady's absence. Somehow her presence hung like an incubus on me, and my spirit was fettered. While she was here I seemed to lose my free agency, and all volition. She controlled me as if I had been a little child, or an animal. Mrs. Murray and her son were to take a sea voyage. Miss Glencoe did not intimate a word of her intention to accompany them abroad; but on the morning of their departure, she came into my room, attired for traveling. After shedding a great many tears (which she could call up at any moment), she kissed me, and with many regrets, informed me that she would be absent for several years. She then tripped from the room. Presently she returned, and begged me to send her warmest regard to you, and to tell you that your cousin Conrad would be married immediately after his arrival at London.

"I trust, dear child, that you will forgive your poor, deluded mother, for this grand mistake she made in trying to shape your destiny. I am firmly convinced now that it was all wrong. Better, far better, to take the world as it comes; making the best of it, endeavoring to be prepared to meet whatever fate may develop itself. There is a way to do this, child. The dear creature who sits by me now, has told me of it. It is revealed in the good book; but, heretofore, with those great monstrous scales on my eyes, I could not discern the truth. Your grandmother Glencoe will be here next week. Carolyn says, she is the "salt of the earth." I hope she may prove so. Alas! (God forgive me for saying it), I have never seen a good Glencoe, save yourself; unless your cousin John is one.

"Write to me now, darling. I never received a letter, note, or message from any one—not even yourself—while Miss Glencoe was in the house. Did it never strike

you, that she and Mrs. Murray were of the same calibre? God bless and save my child.

“ ‘ MYRA GLENCOE.’

“ ‘ P. S. I trust I have not done Miss Glencoe injustice. Were I examined in a court of justice, and her life and my own at stake, I could not shape a reason into words, why I do not love my “dear niece,” as she calls herself. I can not point out one single positive wrong she has ever done my family. Yet I dread her, stand in awe of her, and can not love her.

“ ‘ YOUR MOTHER.’ ”

The next is from cousin John, and of recent date. I glanced over it. After chiding me for coldness, and scolding me for not writing, and entreating me to do so, and then reiterating his admiration, and unchanging devotion, all interlarded with those sweet words, which are so pretty, as well as acceptable to ears attuned by the Blind Boy to listen, he went on to state that he would sail in half an hour for the port of London. The object of this sudden visit to England, was to witness the nuptials of his sister. He further said, that immediately after the marriage he would hasten back to claim his reward — the just recompense of so much patient devotion.

The next letter was from cousin Amanda. I knew the handwriting, and laid it down (I felt a presentiment of sorrow), and opened the last one. This was also from cousin John. He had, it seems, been driven by contrary winds, half over the Atlantic; had been shipwrecked and saved by a small cruiser, which was again stranded on the American coast; consequently the object of his voyage no longer existed. His sister’s marriage, of course, would not be delayed because he was. He now expected to return home, where he hoped to meet me, if not on his

arrival, very soon after. I took up cousin Amanda's letter, and with a sort of icy sickness at the heart, prepared to read it.

"**M**Y DEAR LITTLE COUSIN—Would that I had time to tell you of the many wonderful things I have seen since I left home. We have been here in the metropolis of the world, the emporium of every thing, the terminus of all things, two weeks. At first, I felt like an atom, so small, so insignificant in this great thoroughfare, that I began to fear God would forget to take cognizance of me. This wore off, and as our little party drew closer together in our own sitting-room of this immense hotel (which numbers more inhabitants than many of our incorporated towns in America), I got to think the greater the city, and larger the hotel, the more our privacy, security, and freedom.

"I am very much engaged, occupied, and *absorbed*; as you will of course understand, when I tell you I was married the day before yesterday, and should have set out on our tour of Europe, to-day, but have been detained by the illness of Mrs. Murray. My sweet little cousin, I wish you could see my glorious husband, now, as I behold him. Tall and straight as a North American Indian; dark and composed as a Spanish hidalgo; learned and wise as an Athenian; firm, decisive, and steadfast as a Scot; polite and affable as a Frenchman; aristocratic as an Englishman; and good, and noble, and just, and handsome as an American. And think of it, you little witch, this miracle of perfection is the husband of your cousin Amanda.

"Did you ever know any one have such a run of good fortune? Was ever woman so blest? Mine is a match of intense affection. I loved my husband from the first moment I laid my eyes on him, and I resolved then to

capture that prize, cost me what it might. I have succeeded. I rarely fail.

"I hope that you and my brother are as well suited to each other, and just as happy as we are. This will suffice for mere mortals. But the sons of the house of Glen-coe are not distinguished among men as good husbands. The daughters make the *fondest* wives in the world, if they are not crossed.

"My husband would send his love to Mrs. John Glen-coe, if he knew I was writing. We both believe that my brother waived the honor he promised us, in favor of greater felicity at home. Now, my dear, let me whisper a few little words very softly in your ear. We Glencoes are a jealous people, and exacting. Beware of giving even slight cause. Remember that 'trifles light as air,' etc. Remember Desdemona! Beware of the *familiar friend* of old; the affectionate cousin, etc. Mind how you rouse the sleeping demon in that little man's breast, by look or word, written or spoken. For your life's peace, for your soul's salvation, I warn you.

"We are coming home; then I suppose we shall contrast husbands. Ah! as much as I love yours, I fear he will suffer by comparison. I can love your husband, but I warn *you* not to love mine. Present my love to my uncle and aunt, and believe me as ever, yours,

AMANDA MURRAY."

"Amanda Murray!" shrieked I, so loudly and fiercely that the girls in the next room came running in to see what was the matter. It had passed off. I made some slight excuse, which was received. I was mistaken; I had thought I could not feel. Yes, I was mistaken. I knew, now, that I had but one course to pursue, to yield myself to my fate.

Another half year rolled by, and then I was called

home. I found my mother resigned to all things, even unto death. My grandmother was with her, who was full of love, and sympathy, and Christian piety. My mother's condition was much ameliorated. My father seemed greatly improved in temper. My nurse was now suffered to be with me, which was a great solace. There was a student of my father's living in the house, Walter Jocelyn, a very agreeable, handsome youth. Yes, things had greatly improved since I was last at home.

When I retired the first night, I said to Aunt Molly, "Well, dear, good nurse, I am so glad to have you here. I think there is quite an improvement in the domestic regime. I am let alone, now, which is a great comfort, you know."

"Yes, bless God! that's a good thing, ef it'll only hold out."

"Why, my father seems scarcely to know that I am in the house. I do not think he has spoken a word to me," said I.

"Yes, I know, honey; but just wait till that little black-whiskered man comes back. He with the quiverin' upper lip."

"Where is my cousin John," said I. "When will he be here, nurse?"

"Oh! he'll be here soon enough; I'll warrant he'll come, now that Miss Pet's got back. Well, honey, there's worse men than Mas'r John Glencoe," said she, settling herself for a nap.

"But, Aunt Molly, what has produced this change about the house?"

"Good Marsters! Miss Pet, has you had so much trouble, that you has lost all your smartness a'most? Why can't you see? Bless God! Child, can't you see? Aint they done carry their pints? Aint that woman done got her son married to the rich gal, and aint they got the fortunes to splurge on? Then aint they gwine to marry you

to the rich man, and then marster will have part o' his'n, to prop up the falling house of the fortunes of Glencoe."

"Nurse, do you think it was Cousin John who lay in ambush to play the spy, and inform on us, when we were in the conservatory, and then had me sent from home?"

"Whew! Wh-e-w!" and she spun out the word into a long, shrill whistle. "No, i-n-d-e-e-d; Mas'r John was not in that bush what you speaks of. No, child, they never told him a word of it. They too smart for that. They keep them things a perfound secret. I tell you agin, Miss Pet, thar's worse folks than Mas'r John. But he perfect tiger when he's raised. Oh, that little man's the devil when his blood's up."

"Well, who was the spy, Aunt Molly?"

"Oh, child! I so sorry; you aint a bit cute now. Who you reckon would do sich thing, but that same one what substract the letter from your writing scrutore, and don't you know who that was? I found it all out on her; and I was great mind to tell Mas'r Conrad, but I was 'fraid old Mas'r John would kill me."

The next morning, at breakfast, my father told me (speaking very mildly), that he wished to have an hour's conversation with me. I assented. "Marianna, if you prefer it, I will order the barouche, or carriage, or the horses, and we will ride," said he.

"Thank you, sir, it is unnecessary; I can hear you here, or in the parlor." So he led the way thither. When we were seated, he plunged right into the subject, as if afraid to trust himself with any circumlocution? "You know, my daughter (he had never called me his daughter before in his life, and this first word of endearment moved me to tears to begin with), that your Cousin John Glencoe is very sincerely and deeply attached to you. Do you not know this?" said he, smoothing my hair down, and toying with my curls.

"He has often told me so, sir."

"You believe him, I hope, Marianna? Do you not?"

"Yes, sir. I have had ample proofs of it. I do not doubt"—

"Then you return it, of course, my child?"

"No, sir," said I, looking him full in the face.

"Why not?" rejoined he.

"Because I can not, sir."

"Why so? Why can not you give your little, foolish, silly heart in return for his spacious, generous, manly one?"

"Perhaps, sir, for the reason, that it is what you call it, a weak, silly one. But, father, I have no heart to give. If you command it, I will give my hand to my cousin. But that will be all, and in honesty I must tell him so."

"Girl, on your life do not breathe a word of the sort. You know not the man. Were you a thousand times fairer and more beautiful than you are, and his wife, he would strangle you, or cut your throat in a phrenzy of love or jealous rage"—

"Or," said I, very calmly, "when his passion had cooled, incarcerate me in a dungeon, or immure me in a madhouse."

My father shuddered visibly; but I sat unmoved.

"Why talk thus, Marianna? Who has charge of that rare, precious little thing, your heart?" said he, trying to smile playfully. "Tell me, child, for whom are you keeping it?"

"Papa, this is mockery! worse than mockery, cruelty, the refinement of cruelty. You know that I have loved my cousin Conrad all the days of my life. You know, that this affection, I will not call it a passion, commenced in childhood, nay from my very cradle, and grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. You know, that I would have sacrificed friends, relations, position, place, name, and fame, for him. You also knew, sir, that with a ruthless hand you tore me away from

him, that you prevented our meetings ever afterward, intercepted all letters and messages; then formed a combination with his mother and your niece, and blended a few facts, innocent in themselves, with such a tangled web of falsehood, that neither he, nor I, could unravel it. We are separated. We may never meet, yet there are some natures which do not change."

"Cease! cease your upbraiding! What will it avail you now to think of him? He has deserted you, proved recreant to his faith, and yet would you cling to him?"

"Does the vine leave the ruined shrine because it has been desecrated? Does it not rather entwine its tendrils lovingly about it, not being able to restore, then to conceal its decay?"

"He has preferred another to you; he is a changed man, and heartless. He is not worthy of such disinterested attachment."

"Grant you; but does the ivy fall away from the oak, because it has been riven and blasted by the thunder bolt? Saw you ever that, my father?"

"This is all needless and unavailing. Why pursue such a strain. I am mortified and pained to see so little spirit in one of my name. Such cases have never occurred among the Glencoes," said he, bitterly.

"Spirit! did you say spirit, sir? Well, I have none; you say truly. It has been crushed out, after being broken! You had no hand in this, papa, had you? Now, sir, inform me, if you please, as to the object of this conversation? To what do you desire it should lead? I am ready to obey your commands."

"I have received a letter from Mr. John Glencoe. He writes that he will not present himself here again, save as your accepted lover. That he has no desire to persecute you with his addresses; and if you do positively and unequivocally reject him, that he will at once go abroad, and never see you, or cross your path again."

"This is certainly very noble and generous of my cousin John," said I, and I could not refrain from weeping.

"Well, daughter, what shall I write?"

"I will talk to my mother, sir, and give you my answer afterward. But have the kindness to tell me candidly, why you are so anxious for this union? You know I am very young. I do not wish to be married, still I am ready to obey your commands; but I should like to hear your reasons."

"I can not tell you. Why, what reason do you suppose I can have, other than your own welfare and happiness?"

"Ah! you have never consulted my happiness; say not that. Whatever your motives may be, I am ready to obey you; but do not say that again, papa; I will not hear it."

"Well! no matter, go now and talk to your mother and grandmother; then come back quickly, and tell me what to write." And, for the first time in his life, he kissed me. I really do believe, that the hope of gaining my father's forgiveness, for that first sin (*i. e.*, that I was not born a boy), and that he would be reconciled to my poor mother, and, after a while, would get to love us both, had more to do with gaining my consent than aught else. When I had told them of the nature of this long colloquy in the parlor, and that I had come to ask their advice, my poor mother wept, and my grandmother rocked herself violently. At last she said, 'Well, Myra, don't kill yourself crying at the outset. If you are opposed to it, tell the child so, and let her go back to her father.'

"O God! have pity on me, and direct me in this trying emergency," cried my mother.

"That is always a good prayer. But you must decide quickly. I don't want John Glencoe to come storming up

here like a hurricane as he is, when he's angry," said my grandmother.

"What do you advise, grandma? I was sent equally to you."

"Now, child, my opinion is that your heart should be your only counselor. When a girl is so undecided as to require advice, you may be sure there is something wrong. My belief is, that you had better let John Glencoe pass. There are more men and women than you two; besides, you are such a baby, you are not fit to take the head of a family."

"O mother! you are ruining everything. You will get us all into trouble. Her father will be furious. I can't explain, but there is a tie, a link of interest between them; some business matter, which makes it indispensably necessary to fasten John Glencoe to his uncle with grappling irons, as it were."

"And this poor child is to be made the grappling iron, is she? It is all wrong. I will never give my voice to such a bargain." Just then, my father came in, and she continued, "So, my son, you are about to sell your child to that hot-headed John Glencoe, for value received. Aye! is it so?"

My father turned livid with rage. She went on, "I am opposed to this sale."

"But why, madam?" said he, biting his lip to keep down his fury. "I do not think you understand the matter."

"Yes, I understand enough to know that she don't love him; and love is the only real safeguard to the virtue of such a child-wife as she will be."

"Oh! for the love of heaven," said my mother, "say no more. You will raise a fiend here, presently, that all your philosophy, reason, and religion will be incommensurate to put down."

My grandmother walked close up to my father, and looking him full in the face, said, " My son, I have one thing more to state, and then I'm done; but I'll stick to it, and you must abide by it. When that poor thing becomes the wife of that jealous, fierce savage, and he begins to exact and extort, ending with violence, like all of you, that child will hate and then despise him. She will be goaded on by his treatment and her own wretchedness, to commit some desperate act. Then you, at the head of the pack, will raise the hue and cry, and like a parcel of blood-hounds, you'll hunt her to death. Let the sin then rest where it is due, on your own shoulders; and retribution *will* fall where it is just, upon your own head. As for myself, I will stand by that child, right or wrong." And the dear, good, upright old lady hobbled out of the room.

My father looked as ferocious as a tiger after her; then turning to me, said, " Marianna, what shall I write to your cousin ? "

" Word the message as you choose, sir," said I. " I have already told you that I would obey your mandate. Why should I care ? " He frowned darkly, and left the room.

I never knew what he wrote; but three days from that time, Mr. Glencoe arrived. I met him without any emotion. On his part, he was so delighted to see me that he overlooked my apathy. He sat by me the whole day, and if I broke away and ran to my room, he very soon created some excuse to call me down—a book to look over with him, a print to examine, a walk or ride, or perhaps he wished to practice with me some duet for the flute and guitar. He performed beautifully on several instruments.

On the third day, the dreaded subject was broached, and he asked me to name a day. I said, with an involuntary shudder, that all days were alike to me now, and then most inopportunely burst into tears. He was holding my

hand at the time he commenced speaking; but at this juncture he coldly laid it on my lap, drew himself up, and leaning back in his chair, remained silent. I felt that his eyes were fixed on me, which only tended to increase my distress.

At last I became calm. I raised my eyes imploringly to his face, but in an instant closed them. Would to God they had closed forever! I never saw so terrific a countenance. He was as pale as death; that spasmodic twitching of the upper lip was so intense as to disclose the teeth, which, like his sister's, were very fine, remarkably sharp, and exceedingly white. When those teeth were visible, the mouth gave forth a decided snarl. His eyes were bloodshot.

I spread my hands out, holding the palms toward him, as if to drive him from me, and involuntarily exclaimed, "O God! help me. What is the matter with you, sir? Cousin John, why do you look so?"

He arose and walked the floor, with his thumbs stuck in the arm-holes of his vest. I watched him for some time, unnoticed. Then I went to him, and laying my hand on his arm, as I looked up at him, said, "Sir, I give you until to-morrow morning to think of this. I have no apology to make; I will give no explanation. If, at the end of that time, when you have pondered on it, and brooded over it, you still desire this marriage, I will consent in two days, after, to fulfill my father's engagement with you."

He seemed surprised, I thought; but beneath that, I could see great satisfaction. He caught my hand, carried it to his lips, and would for the first time have embraced me. I drew back.

"Not so, my cousin. Wait until you have reflected, and made your decision."

"I have made it even now. I will take you, with that veil of mystery hanging over your conduct. Hoping that

you will yourself raise it, and that you will then reward my devotion by loving me. Promise me this, dear girl"—

"I can promise you nothing, sir. I say now, and I will vow no more at the altar. I will do my best to please you. When you have considered on it, and after we have been to church, and done that which I hope we will both try to do, however imperfectly, then meet me here. Good evening, sir."

I did not come to the tea table. I took my breakfast in my room. I saw no one but my nurse, who ministered to my few requirements. I felt that I did not wish to look on the face of a human being save my mother and this good creature. To my father's frequent requests, and then his commands to come to the parlor, I only replied, "I am indisposed."

At eleven o'clock, I descended to the drawing-room, attired for church. My cousin came up, offered his arm, and thus we proceeded. We took our seats in my father's pew, side by side. When the service was over, we returned home without saying a word.

At dinner we all appeared as usual. The young man to whom I have before alluded, Walter Jocelyn, was there. Being very estimable himself, and my father as hospitable, this youth was invited to become a guest in his house. During the whole of that morning, he watched us closely. I would never look up but his eyes were fixed upon me. This was embarrassing and a little curious, I thought, seeing that we were strangers. After dinner I took my seat in the drawing-room, to await the gentlemen who lingered over their wine. Walter came first.

"Miss Glencoe," said he, "my acquaintance with you is short, but not so brief but that I have divined your secret; have also seen disclosed the rock on which your domestic peace is to be wrecked."

"Oh my friend," said I (for I felt a premonition that he was, and ever would be my friend), then you know that my heart is not in this marriage?"

"Yes: and that you are most wretched. I foresee, that few or none of your friends will have access to you after your marriage. You will be guarded with the lynx-eye of suspicion. Now let me tell you; I am ready at any moment, in any way (no matter whether right or wrong), to serve you. My person, my purse, my influence, my mind, my soul are subject to your slightest command. Soon it will be a crime to tell you this. Then sink it deep into the cells of your memory, to be called up in time of need. Feel no dread or distrust; remember, that the eye of love is as far-seeing and as vigilant as that of jealousy. Grant me one favor?" I bowed assent. "Suffer me to kiss your hand, in token of the good faith between us, and that I am *understood*."

He said this last word with peculiar emphasis. I held out my hand. He imprinted a fervent kiss on it, and bowing, left.

In a few moments my cousin John entered the room, hurriedly; looked curiously about, from right to left.

"I thought Mr. Jocelyn was here?"

"He has just left, sir," said I, coldly.

"Of whom was he in pursuit?"

"He did not say, sir; but I supposed he had called in to converse with me. He did not speak of any one else."

"Did he so? Then why did he leave so soon?"

"I can not tell; I did not invite him to remain, and I rather think he knew, or suspected our appointment."

I felt my blood boil in my veins, but I was determined to avoid all scenes. This appeared to be satisfactory. When he found I did not evidence either anxiety, curiosity, or trepidation at this first demonstration of the ruling

passion, he came and threw himself down on the sofa by me, and taking my hand, looked earnestly into my face as he said :

" My love, did you ever know, or can you conceive of such affection as this? Listen : I once knew a man who loved a woman so fiercely, that he got to hate every other man who looked at her, and in time, grew jealous of her own father."

I smiled faintly, and added : " Well, did such love make them happy ? "

" Him it made happy beyond the power of description."

" But the lady, how it was with her ? "

" Why, as far as the chronicles tell, she was happy, too. How could it be otherwise ? She was very beautiful, and exceedingly gentle, and angelic in all things." With this he caught me in his arms, and strained me to his breast with such violence, that to this day, I am in doubt whether he did not intend to crush me to death. Be this as it may, I screamed out, and my father came running into the room from the parlor.

" In the name of all the saints ! what is the matter ? "

" Nothing, papa," said I, laughing and crying at the same time, " only cousin John is trying to kill me already."

" Fie ! fie !" said he, angrily. " John, I wonder how you can wish to be bothered with such a little fool."

When we were again alone, I said, " Sir, I came here to talk seriously ; but I must say, you are very light and frivolous this Sabbath afternoon."

" Our Sunday ends with High Mass until Vespers, you know."

" Yes," said I. " So tell me to what decision you have come ? "

" Now, is not that too much ? How can you ask such a question ? Have you not been answered ? I can not live without you, Marianna. I must possess you either

with, or without love. But woe to the man who steps between us ! Aye ! let him try it." He had risen from his seat, and stood before me—his hand on the gold-hilted dagger which he constantly wore on his bosom. That upper lip, and those dark, grey eyes, performed their functions as faithfully as ever ; and the white teeth gleamed from under the dark moustache. I never saw that expression on his face, but my mind reverted to the hapless Desdemona, and my cousin's warning letters.

On the following Tuesday, as I had promised, we were married. My mother's ill health, furnished the excuse for a private wedding.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE JOURNAL—THE RETURN.

“BETTER confide and be deceived,
A thousand times, by treacherous foes,
Than once accuse the innocent,
Or let suspicion mar repose.”

“In the human breast two master-passions can not co-exist.”

A YEAR has elapsed — time flying, sometimes, so swiftly that I did not even hear the rustle of his wings. Then they were clogged, and heavy, and I felt them trail on the ground ; taking up trifles — insignificant things — which made life wearisome. We have just returned from a northern tour, and are now again at the old homestead. My mother’s health has not improved ; and my grandmother has taken up her abode in the house.

My parents made it a *sine qua non* with my husband, that we should reside with them ; everything goes on swimmingly. My father seems to be no longer annoyed by duns, or pinched by necessity. His purse is like the “widow’s cruise,” — bottomless. Mr. Glencoe, no longer cousin John, is the presiding, controlling, and *supplying* divinity of the place. My father loves him ; my mother looks up to him ; everybody respects him ; my grandmother endures him because he is my husband ; and I, who should have all those feelings blent into one, only fear him !

He seems to love me as fiercely as ever, and nothing has yet occurred to mar our tranquillity. I said we had

just returned home. Preparations are making to celebrate this event with great magnificence. It has been a jubilee in the house since the first night after our arrival. Friends and acquaintances come flocking in. Congratulatory and adulatory speeches are the most current coin in use. My gentlemen friends say, "She is greatly improved." My lady favorites exclaim, "Lord! how Mrs. Glencoe has grown." My mother seems full of gratitude that I am not heart-broken and martyr-like. My father addresses me as "My daughter, Mrs. John Glencoe," and at last seems proud of me. My grandmother rocks herself, shakes her head, but says nothing. Nurse says, "Bless God! all's well what turns out well. I hope he'll hold out."

The invitations are sent for three hundred persons, and the third day after this, this great *fête* is to come off. I have had a splendid dress ordered from New York, five hundred dollars will not cover the cost of it, to say nothing of the jewels. My husband has already expended a small fortune on me; I ought to love him, children are generally won by gauds and gewgaws. Would to God I could become attached to him. Every new manifestation of his regard makes my heart sick. I wish sometimes that he were cross, so that I might in some way appease my self-accusing.

We are sitting in the drawing-room, the dress has arrived. It is superb; I am charmed with it, or rather I would be, if I cared for anything. By some strange train of ideas, without any association, my mind is far away. I am thinking how much joy, and gladness, and delight, would be gushing forth from my loving heart, if *he* were sitting there instead of *him*. Then the still small voice whispers, "Bethink thyself, Marianna. Thou art a wedded wife!" And I droop my head and weep. On being asked wherefor (for my attentive husband never fails to inquire),

I reply, "Because, sir, you are so kind and generous." He looks me keenly in the face; but I have been obliged to resort to subterfuges, too often, to be embarrassed by a look.

While we sat there, the servant comes in with the letters. There are several for Dr. Glencoe, and two or three for John Glencoe, junr. One has a black seal. He lays that aside, and when he has read the others, opens it. He becomes deadly pale, but is silent; then he rubs his hand over his face, as if his thoughts strayed, or he felt his mind growing obtuse.

After awhile he handed me the letter, and went away. I was glad he did so—had he witnessed that fierce paroxysm, that breaking up of the *ice*, that bursting forth of suppressed feeling, and long pent-up emotions, I know not what would have been the result. I hastened to my room, locked the door, and again read the letter. Mrs. Murray, my cousin Amanda, is dead. She had died suddenly in giving birth to a little daughter; and they are now on their way home. Mrs. Murray, his mother, was still in bad health; was much changed, and longed for retirement, that she might devote herself to the little Genevieve, the infant daughter of my cousin Amanda.

The letter was from Conrad. He desired his love to his cousin Marianna. I sat for a long time musing over its contents. I would not look into my heart. I would not suffer myself to contemplate the present or the future. I wished to act right, and I aimed to do so. My cousin wrote in a manly, dignified tone. His letter was brief, cold, and sorrowful. There was no assumption of intense, overwhelming grief; no affectation of fine sentimentality. He appeared as I had thought him—all truth and candor.

There came a low tap; I got up, and found that I was scarcely able to move. I reeled forward, and when I opened the door, fell forward into the arms of my hus-

band ; I had fainted. When I recovered, I found him hanging tenderly over me.

We were alone ; my husband kissed me, and said, looking very sad, " Dear child of sensibility ! But we loved her so much ! Poor dear lost sister ! Thine was a brilliant but meteor-like career ! "

My father came in, and after making exactly the proper number of inquiries, and offering precisely the suitable amount of condolence, said, " I must send out your regrets, and have this festival stayed, I presume, John ? "

" If you please, uncle." Then he walked across the room, and stood for some time gazing moodily out of the window.

A week more, and the travelers are at home. *His* apartments are opposite to mine. I look over, and see him passing to and fro in his room. Now he stands beside the window, and *I*, like a guilty thing, conceal myself behind the curtain and peep out covertly. It has been three years since we met. He appears from this view to be much taller and stouter ; wears heavy black whiskers, but no moustache ; looks thoughtful and sad ; has his eyes fixed steadfastly on our house, on my window.

It is the month of June ; the windows are raised, and, as they are large, I can see into his room.

Mr. Glencoe crosses the street, and rings the bell. I tremble with excitement at the thought of any one touching *his* dear hand. O God ! forgive me ! I feel that I would be willing to die, to be crushed to death, if I could once more be clasped to his bosom ! My husband approaches him ; they shake hands. Now, there seems to be an awkward silence ; after which they seat themselves near the window, and enter into conversation. I find my heart instituting a comparison between my cousin and my husband. God help me ! I can no longer control my thoughts ! I must tear myself away from the maddening scene. I

threw myself on the sofa; then I went to the lounge; arose from that and dashed myself down on the floor; then got up and lay upon the bed, putting the pillow on my face, and pressing it down furiously, as if to shut out all remembrance. Alas! Externals have nothing to do with it. There is a long record of the past within, adorned by his image.

I hear Mr. Glencoe talking below; I know that he will either send for me or come up. I bathe my face, arrange my hair, make my toilet, and pass into my mother's room. She and my grandmother are engaged in talking with some lady neighbors; so I manage to escape their notice. Presently a servant comes. "Mr. Glencoe says, will you do him the favor to come and sit with him, madam?"

I go down immediately, and find him looking very somber. After sitting together for some time, talking on indifferent subjects, he says suddenly, looking me full in the eyes, "My love, you do not inquire about your cousin Conrad." In an instant I felt the blood rush to my face; I knew he marked this down. "Why have you not asked about him?"

I stammered out, "I thought it would make you still more sad, and forebore to speak until you chose to open the subject." This did not do; I saw he was not satisfied. All that day and the next he was silent and moody. I would look up, and find his eyes intently fixed on me, as if he thought there was some secret which he expected to surprise and read on my countenance.

Two days after that, we were sitting in the parlor, when the street door bell rang, and I heard that voice which never failed to thrill my whole frame, ask, "Is my cousin Marianna at home?"

"Yes, sir; walk into the drawing-room," said the boy, opening the door.

On first catching the sound of his voice, I had sprung to my feet, and as he entered the door, with an irrepress-

ible shout of gladness, I rushed into his arms and hid my head in his bosom. He strained me to his breast, kissed me passionately on the forehead, cheeks, lips, over and over again ; then held me at arm's length, looking at me so lovingly, so tenderly, that I was forced to close my eyes or die of rapture. Then he would catch me up again, and murmur, " My dear cousin ! My darling girl ! My own one !" Then holding me off, and looking at me, would say, " Oh ! how beautiful ! How marvelously beautiful ! How exquisitely lovely ! "

I presume all this passed in a much shorter time than has taken to write it. We took no note of *his* flight. The world, with all its vexatious annoyances, had receded from my thoughts. I was only conscious of a wild, delirious joy. I was once more resting on that idolized bosom. I felt his heart beat, I heard it ; and my own throbbed responsively. But this state could not last. I should have expired in ecstacy. Ah ! why do we, poor, short-sighted mortals, evermore drain the cup to the dregs, if it is not dashed from the lips ?

We awoke, but it was too late. On turning to sit down, we met my husband face to face. Conrad had not seen him, and *I* had forgotten him. There he stood, with his arms folded over his breast, his eyes bloodshot, his face bloodless, and that upper lip quivering, and jerking, and snarling, revealing those sharp, white, glistening teeth. I fell on the sofa, and covered my eyes with my hands, to shut out the appalling spectacle.

Conrad approached him, and said with stern calmness, " Sir, I hold myself accountable to you for this scene. I am at your service at any time."

A low, hissing laugh, with " I thank you, sir," escaped my husband, and they left the room together.

I was alone. I felt bewildered, almost insane, for a few moments, frantic. I would have rushed after them. I wished to flee away, to hide from the face of every human

being, so that I might be alone with my thoughts. I essayed to do so, but only had strength to totter across the room, and fall again on a sofa. Then, fortunately, there was a suspension of my faculties; I sank into a state of inanity. A lethargic repose stole over me, and I lay quite still. I neither saw nor heard anything. I felt no anguish, knew no joy. Hope seemed to have taken her everlasting flight, and memory to have closed her avenues.

The servant came in to light the gas, then supper was announced. I got up mechanically, and passing into the room, took my seat at the table. My grandmother presided at the head, the family surrounded the board. My friend Walter sat opposite to me. Neither my father nor my husband came in. The meal passed off in silence. I saw that young Walter's eyes were fixed on me; I did not care. He addressed some common-place questions; I did not answer, for I could not comprehend his words. I gulped down my tea, then rose from the table and left the room as mechanically as I had entered it. I had gone and taken my seat in the parlor.

Walter followed me thither, sat down by me, looking mournfully into my face. "Ah! I knew it; my own heart foreboded this. I would have warned you, but I had no opportunity. Ah! how quickly the poison corrodes!" I said not a word, but sat quite still, with my eyes closed, and my arms hanging languidly down, scarcely breathing.

Presently he took my hand. I sprang to my feet. "Oh! for the love of Christ! do not touch me! I am mad! Oh! I'm mad!" and I rushed to my room, threw myself on the floor, where I remained throughout the whole night, without undressing. I heard the clock strike every hour until day. Oh! that long, dreary, lonely night!

He did not return. I could not tell whether I was pleased or disturbed at it. I had ceased to reason, and no longer tried to understand myself. Morning dawned, and I had not slept. My maid came in and said my mother was inquiring for me. My father had not returned, and she felt alarmed. I suffered myself to be dressed, and went to my mother. I found her much excited. Seeing me so calm, she grew also tranquil. She said that Conrad and John Glencoe had left the house together, the latter being as pale as a corpse. Soon after, a messenger came for my father; since which time they had not been heard of. She claimed of me to explain the mystery. I could not; I had no heart to speak.

Just then my grandmother came to the bedside. "Tut, tut! what is this fuss about? Stop all your crying. Come, hush it all up at once. There's nothing the matter. You know not these Glencoes yet? By to-morrow, all will come right. They are only at the club. They find the faces of them things with red and black spots more attractive than the countenances of their pretty wives. That's all. It has always been the way with them. Think no more of it."

But my mother could not be thus easily pacified. She therefore sent Molly over to Mrs. Murray's to inquire after the health of the invalid, with directions to reconnoiter.

She soon came back and reported that she found the lady sitting up, dressed in a splendid mourning *robe de chambre*; but she was unable to walk from a recent attack of neuralgia. After she left Mrs. Murray's room, on her way through the hall, she heard her name called. She turned quickly and saw my cousin come from his room; he gave her two notes, then went back and shut the door.

"Oh, ho! Beginning that game again, are you? Well,

I reckon the old one in there will soon break that up as once before, when she comes to know it." Then she began to sing a line from 'Love's Young Dream,'--

"Oh! that hallowed form is ne'er forgot,
Which first love traced."

And Tivvy ran off, laughing and singing.

One note was to my mother, expressing his regret on hearing of her increased indisposition, and begging her to name an hour to receive him. The other was to me.

"AT HOME, 10 o'clock.

"My life, my soul, my Marianna! I care not if you are his wife! You are still my only sunbeam! The only ray to light and warm my cold and gloomy path through this cheerless vale. I believe we have been deceived—defrauded. I think now, since I have met you, and felt the throbs of that loving heart, as it panted on my bosom, that it was all a work of treachery—a tissue of falsehoods—a device of *evil ones* to tear us asunder. And now I love you ten thousand times more than ever. Can you conceive of such a thing, dear girl? I was led to believe that you were estranged—that you preferred him, the stranger cousin, to me, who helped your mother to rear you, and who had, from that hour of innocent joys and infantile delights, loved you on with an untiring devotion, until I breathed the passionate adoration of manhood into your pure ears. I am now, Anna, convinced that all was false seeming, and that those letters were forgeries. But who was the perpetrator? you will ask me. Aye! let us not seek to know. It is too late to remedy the evil; but I shall not struggle against the promptings of my soul, which tell me that there is no purer or holier shrine on the face of the earth; and it is there I shall, from henceforth, offer up my homage, my untiring adoration. Do not be alarmed at what tran-

spired in the parlor. Your —— that is, Mr. Glencoe—is a perfect tiger in fierceness ; a lion in courage. But do you not know, my love, that these wild beasts are in subjection to their keepers ? Your poor cousin Conrad has had an opportunity of studying the peculiar traits of mind and temper of the Gleneoes.

“ Behave with calm dignity ; make no concessions ; no apology for what has passed, or for what may occur. You have done no wrong ; you meant none. Nature—suppressed nature, burst forth then. The human heart is said to be deceitful above all things ; but truth sometimes forced to conceal itself at the bottom, will at last, cry out for freedom, and assert its supremacy. Such love as ours is from heaven, heavenly. It is an emanation from Him, who is the source of all love. We have been cheated of ours, and the wronged and wrung soul demands retribution.

“ Trust to me, my sweet girl. I will never compromise or involve you in trouble. I shall continue to visit you and your mother as usual ; that is, if you will permit me. Express but one word of disapprobation to this proposal ; show but the slightest symptom of satiety, and I will withdraw. Say that your happiness is increased by this, and I will stand aloof and watch over you from a distance. Till then, my life, my love, my soul, I am your true friend. I shall call on your mother in the course of the day. Shall I also, see my little cousin Anna ?

“ C. C. MURRAY.”

I locked myself up within my chamber. I pondered over this letter. I did not subscribe to it with my understanding ; my sense of honor forbade it. The still small voice condemned it. But the heart is sometimes a special pleader. Yet I could not forget that I was a wife, an immaculate one. I thought it cruel in my cousin to tempt me thus ; and I uttered one of those bitter walls, “ O

God! teach me the way, and deliver me from temptation!" I again read the letter; reason lent me her ray, while in the gloomy solitude of my room, to view his conduct and scan his motives. The verdict of my better judgment, and that of religion, as far as I knew, was against him; but this heart, this poor, weak, sinful heart arrayed itself in panoply of steel to do battle in his cause. But I had prayed to God to deliver me from this strait, and my grandmother had told me to do so at all times in faith. So I firmly believed that my impulses, thenceforth, would be directed and incited by Him. Reader, can you doubt the issue?

I did not go down to tea. The next day came, without bringing home either my father or husband. In the afternoon, my mother's maid came in, and said Mr. Murray was with her mistress, and desired to see me. I begged to be excused, pleading a violent headache, which was true. I heard no more from him.

A few hours after, when I had fallen into a light sleep, there was a gentle tap at the door. My husband entered and came right up to me. I rose to meet him, expecting rebukes and abuse. He kissed me, and his lips were hot; there was also a smell of wine on his breath. He seemed nervous and excited; laughed a good deal, but this, too, partook of the hollowness and coarseness of the saturnalia. There were many subtleties used to throw me off my guard, and to lead me, as he thought ingeniously, to speak of my cousin, by alluding to his mother several times.

I asked him, at last, if he had yet called?

"Why no, little wife, I have waited for you to show me the way, well knowing that it would be such a treat to you to do so."

Then he looked so keenly into my eyes, that I must have quailed, had there been life enough left in me to

furnish one single emotion. I calmly remarked, "I am at your service, sir, at any time."

He laughed loudly again, and said, "My uncle John would have dragged me in there last night, and the night before; but I would not go. By the by, Anna, your father is in love with that piece of frame-work."

"Why do you speak so slightly of Mrs. Murray, sir?"

"Why do you take it up so? Do you love her too?" Then he snarled.

"I cultivate a feeling of complacency for her."

"Yes, I know, and for the son too;" and he grew pale.

"No, sir, that is natural."

He jumped up, and looked fiercely at me, but seeing me quite unmoved, sat down again. Presently he arose, walked toward the door — then wheeling suddenly, as if struck by some new thought, said, "Anna, my love, we are to have company to tea. I wish you to be bright." I bowed assent.

I slept for an hour, then submitted to a very elaborate toilet. I do not know why I did this; I did not analyze the feeling which induced it; but I rather rejoiced at my appearance when I viewed myself in the large mirror. I was summoned to the drawing-room. It occurred to me, that I would wait and see whether my husband would come for me as usual. I remained some time; and when he did not come, I felt hurt. What a strange compound we are! What a bundle of contrarieties! Yesterday, my greatest desire was to keep him at a distance. To-day, I am wounded because he fails in a trifling point of etiquette.

I went to see my mother. When I asked her of my father, she burst into tears. At this moment the door opened, and my husband entered, looking still very much flushed. He comes up to the bedside, and greets my mother, inquiring kindly about her health; then asked for my father? Ere he could be answered, the latter

comes in ; and walking up to me said, "Marianna, you are inquired for in the parlor until I am tired of it. What do you here so long ? Go down, John."

"Yes. Come, my love ; I am here on purpose to lead you to our friends."

As we passed from the room, I heard my grandmother say, "Merciful God ! They are both drunk."

On going into the parlor, my husband seemed to make a point of leading me up to my cousin. He arose without embarrassment, shook hands with me, and seated himself by my side. I glanced around the room. There were several other gentlemen present. All that evening, Mr. Glencoe seemed to feel a savage joy in witnessing the attentions of Conrad ; and tried in every way consistent with politeness, to throw us together. When supper was announced, he was left to go with me, and to take the vacant seat by my side. When I was invited to play, after tea, my cousin handed me to the instrument, turned the music, and asked for the songs. All the other guests were withdrawn to take refreshments—sometimes individually, and once or twice *en masse*. He was never invited.

From that evening I date the commencement of a long series of sorrows and petty persecutions. Everything seemed to excite his suspicions. Then he would break out into bitter reproaches, open invectives, and coarse accusations. Sometimes he would throw out innuendoes, and taunt me, saying, with a hideous smile, that "I had been forsaken, and cast off for another." Again, for a whole week, I was not allowed to see my cousin. Was compelled to keep my room, and feign sickness as an excuse, when he and others called. Then I would be paraded out, and left alone with him ; and tempted and lured on to do and say things heedlessly, which might have been wrong under some circumstances and with less provocation.

I was almost deranged. I scarce knew right from wrong; and if I erred in speech or act, it was from ignorance. But I felt myself growing reckless. I began to feel that I did not feel. I no longer tried to please my husband or my father. They had crushed this desire, with all spirit, out of me. I had become a mere automaton in the hands of any who might take the trouble to direct me. I implicitly obeyed my husband and father: I went and came as they directed. I met my cousin or did not, just as they chose to suggest. I failed in nothing; yet I made no effort to succeed, because I cared not. I was at that time, as *ever*, a chaste, obedient and respectful wife. I did all that God suffered me to do. I did not love him. I could not. I had not the power to do so. These continual droppings of small things—this fretting away of the foundation, was effecting a fearful change in feeling and principle. I was so wretched that I did not see how my condition could be made better or worse. True, he had never yet laid violent hands on me; but he had applied the *epithet* which Othello puts upon Desdemona, more times than the Moor ever did, and with just as much propriety, as far as I can see; perhaps with less just cause.

Alas! all things work against me. I was not now encouraged by the presence of my grandmother, who was a restraint on him as well. She was confined to her bed with rheumatism. The only solace I had, was to creep to her bedside and pour out my lamentations. All my grief, with every other vexatious care, was kept away from my poor invalid mother. About this time, my husband became furiously jealous of the young Walter. I had been forbidden to speak or to reply to him, which I obeyed to the letter. Then I was charged with keeping up a telegraphic intercourse with our eyes; and thus my difficulties increased. I was not permitted to converse with either of these gentlemen, notwithstanding I was

forced to appear in the parlor every evening, where I met them and other company.

I was compelled to pass whole hours at the harp or piano ; required to sing merry songs, to talk blithely (which, by-the-by, I never succeeded in doing), while those bloodshot eyes were fixed upon me like the most dreadful nightmare. God help me ! I know not half my time what I am doing. I scarce comprehend what is said to me. A sense of utter wretchedness is the only abiding feeling.

CHAPTER XL.

THE JOURNAL.—PARADISE AND PURGATORY.

"JEALOUSY, that doats but dooms, and murders, yet adores,"

"I will be master of what is my own;
She is my goods, my chattels, my household stuff."

I HAD passed such an evening as is described in the last chapter, when, toward the close, Mr. Glencoe took his seat on the sofa by my cousin, who had been sitting silent, either absorbed in listening or thinking. "Murray, did you ever hear your cousin sing that last new song?" calling it by name.

"I have not. I was not aware that she had learned it."

"Why, the little fairy! she did not learn it, but played it off as soon as I placed it before her. She does some things intuitively. Anna, will you favor us with it, my love?"

I walked to the piano, not suffering either Conrad or Walter to lead me, lest they might perchance touch my hand, and thereby give offense. They took their station on either side of me, and before I had finished the second verse, my husband left the room. I saw him go out, and I felt an inexpressible relief in his absence, for I had got to loathe him.

A reaction immediately took place. My spirits, which had been spell-bound for such a length of time, now burst forth, and my genial nature reveled in gladness. The incubus was shaken off. Neither the dreaded father, nor the jealous, despised husband were present. I was like a child just let loose from school, in its gambols, or a bird from

its cage. I talked, and laughed, and sung, and played. My voice once more became full and gushing, rich and melodious. I was urged to sing song after song. Walter and my cousin Conrad stood by me, and seemed to enjoy my recovered mirthfulness. They gaze at me fondly, with that tender, protecting look which belongs to a mother for an unfortunate child. O God ! it is well that there is but one such season of bliss in a lifetime. But one ! Were it not so, we should have no aspirations for heaven.

This delicious evening drew to a close. They are gone. I am sitting alone on the same seat at the piano, enjoying it all over in review.

"Come, go to your room, Miss Pet," said a kind but alarmed voice. I jumped up, threw my arms around the neck of my nurse, and wept for happiness and gladness. She led me away.

"Now, don't undress yet. Have it all over with your clothes on," said she.

"What, good nurse ? What do you mean ? Have what over ?"

"Ah ! poor lamb ! You will know too soon, I fear ;" and instead of removing my dress, she made me put on a silk sack. I had worn an evening dress, and my arms and neck were bare.

Some one is at the door, and the good creature slipped from the room. My husband enters. He stands before me with those bloodshot eyes, that ghastly face, and that quivering upper lip. I meet him face to face, unblenchingly. I have done no wrong, I have injured no one ; then why should I quail under any human eye ? He approaches quite near, looks tauntingly at me, runs his face into mine. I do not move, but look at him calmly.

"Out, wanton ! Base, lewd, unblushing —— ! Take that — and that," giving me a furious slap on the face, which sent me reeling to the opposite side of the room. Ere I had recovered from my amazement, he had jerked

me forth again, and blow after blow descended quickly on my face, head, and chest. I was quite unable to shriek out. He had stopped for the want of breath.

Just as his arm was raised to inflict another blow, a powerful hand was laid on his shoulder.

"Stop, sir; on your life don't strike! What! would you strike your wife? your own flesh and bone? Ha! blood! what does this mean? Wretch! coward! rascal! what is the meaning of this?" said Molly, who was, as I have said, a powerful woman. She took him by the shoulders and shook him fiercely; then, giving him a violent push, he fell heavily with his head against the fender. She stopped but an instant to look at him, then exclaimed, in a sullen voice, "God forgive me! I didn't mean to kill him quite, but I have done it, anyhow, and I can't help it."

She hurried me through the basement, again, into the garden, thence to a grotto on the confines of the grounds, and placing me in the arms of my cousin Conrad, proceeded to relate to him the preceding occurrences.

"Great God!" cried he, "What a monster! But, Molly, you may have killed him."

"I 'spect I has, I'm 'fraid I has, but it can't be helped now!"

"But you will be hanged! good honest creature! The provocation and your motive will not shield you; you will be hanged."

"I knows that, as well as you does, Mas'r Conrad. You needn't keep telling me of it, 'thout you be trying to git me use to it 'forehand. But thar's more sides than one to every thing. How they gwine prove it on me? Tell me that clever over?"

"If that man is dead, and we are found here, or it is known that we have been here, every one of us will be implicated in his murder."

"You better see to that child in your arms before she

bleeds to death. He cracked a blood vessel somewhere in her face, and the blood spouted all over his haggard, devilish-looking countenance. I wish you could ha' seen him then."

"But, Molly, I fear, in your just indignation, you have killed him."

"Don't care! He would ha' killed that sweet flower," said she.

"Oh! nurse, I am sick, almost unto death! Take me hence, dear cousin! I can never behold his face again! I will never enter that house any more! I will die here, or in the woods or floods."

"Then thar gwine to be two murders! Don't say that, darling Miss Pet; think of your poor, broken-hearted mother!"

"God bless my mother!" cried I; "I am ready to live or die for her."

It was now decided that Molly should return to the house and reconnoiter. We were alone. I was reclining on that tender, manly breast; I felt myself nestled like a helpless child in that brave bosom. His lips were pressed to mine. I drank in his warm, fragrant breath; I forgot my wrongs; my wounds were no longer felt. I ceased to hate the monster who was the instrument in procuring me this moment of bliss. Molly was not long absent. We were left alone but a short time in the grotto. But it was surely a foretaste of the pure joys of the blessed. We listened to the soothing ripple of the stream, as it so peacefully glided by; the sighing of the winds through the tall trees; the plaintive notes of the stock dove, mourning perhaps some dead or faithless mate; and we drank in delicious draughts of odor, the pure breath of flowers, wafted to us on the gentle, loving breeze. We were soothed and refreshed, and tranquilized; above all, we were together. All else in this world was forgotten. I felt that I would wish to exhale my soul out in love to

him, and gratitude to God. It was a holy hour, and my feelings were holy. I was rapt away.

But alas! all joy is fleeting ; I was dragged back to this mundane sphere, by Molly exclaiming, "Bless God ! I walk so fast, being something of a big nigger, that I'm quite out of wind," and she threw herself down, and panted, and puffed for some time, before we could get her to speak. "No, bless God ! no such good luck ; he's live, and live like to be, I'm afraid. He got up his-self, and washed his own face. I jest went boldly in, and when he turned round and looked at me, I said, 'Now, aint you a nice man for a husband ? Shame ! shame on you.' He made up to me again. I drawed back, and made my fist into a knot as hard as any iron, and said, 'John Glencoe, I'm a nigger, and I reckon you can have me hung for salt and battleing, but keep your hands offer me, else I'll make sure work of it next time. You know I'm no baby in strengt when I'm raised. You almost killed your wife, and I tried to kill you for it.'

"He looked wildly at me, like he jist waked up, and said, 'Oh ! Molly, I'm very sorry ef I have done any one any wrong. I didn't know that I had hurt any body. I was drunk ; have been for two days. I do love her so much, and she will not love me ; all I can do, I can't get her even to say she loves me ; no, not even to say it.'

"Because, that child bin taught to tell the truth only. Do you 'spect to beat love into her with your fist ? Do you ? Tell me that ?'

"Beat ! What about beat ? You dare not, you old devil, insinuate that I ever struck my wife, that gentle, unoffending angel ! I surely have not been such a craven dog as to strike a defenseless woman ?'

"Come, that will do, sir. You can't come it over old Molly Wise that away. You 'spose I didn't see you get up, 'cause my 'little pet lamb' went to sing a few love songs to her cousin, and wring your teeth, and grit your hands,

and turn chalky in the face, and come in the back parlor, and set down thar, and watch 'em through the crack of the folding doors? You think I didn't see you take that riding whip, and place that sterletto in your bosom, or whatever you call that dirk thar, jest because the poor thing happened to sing a few love'—

“‘ Yes, d—— her! she did sing and look love too. I'd do it again! I'd crush her to death, even while I am so frantically in love with her. I believe I'll kill every one of you;’ and he seized me by the two arms and began to shake me. But *I shook him off*, just like Saint Paul did that venomous wild beast what come outen the fire that time and fastened on his arm.

“Then laying hold of him, I holds him like as if he was fastened up in a screw or a vice. I thought his upper lip was gwine to jump off from the rest of his face; while his eyes blazed, and he say, ‘ You d——d old devil you! Don't you know that I can have you put to death for this?’

“‘ Don't you know, you fierce little cock sparrow you! that I can fix you so, that thar will be nobody to tell the tale?’

“‘ Come, Molly, unhand me. Where is your mistress?’

“‘ What you want to know that for? You want to kill her over agin?’

“‘ No; I want to go down on my knees to her, and ask her pardon.’

“‘ Yes; and to-morrow night kill her over agin, if she look at her cousin or Mas'r Walter. What you bring 'em here for; if you that jealous-hearted, and can't help it? I'll tell you now what you got to do. She is gwine to sleep with her grandmother. So you jest go to bed and say nothing about what's happened 'till I consult with Miss Pet. If you don't, I'll go from one end o' this town to tother, and 'spose you by breakfast to-morrow.’

“So I left him. I heard him say, as I came out, ‘ Oh! I was drunk. I wish I had died, before I acted the fool so.’ Then I heard him lock his door. And that's

all, and it's enough. So I left. And now, I think, it's high time for that child to go home. Poor, beat, bruised and battered up thing."

Another passionate embrace, and we separated.

My grandmother seemed very indignant, and wept; while she bestowed execrations on all the Glencoes. She also reiterated her determination to "stick by me," even if the whole world deserted me. I fell asleep while she was repeating those consoling assurances. I did not leave my grandmother's room for a whole week. I learned that my husband looked very grave, and kept quite sober for the first few days; then he fell into the old way. He was now a confirmed inebriate.

Every day I received a note from my cousin. At first, he wrote incoherently, and filled up the pages with maledictions on my persecutors. Then he grew more rational, and after two days commenced making proposals to me as once before—said he would take me to England; but always wound up by saying that my word was the law, and should govern him in all things.

Then he proposed to me to elope with him; said our happiness had been sacrificed to the selfish interest of others, that they had used us for their own aggrandizement; thus blasting our young and beautiful lives. I still declined.

Had I been left in quiet seclusion, with my grandmother, I should never have taken another step downward. To-day, I am able to be up, and to dress myself. A message from my father takes me to the parlor. He demands to know why I have left my husband's room? Then he also applies opprobrious epithets to me; accuses me of cherishing a guilty passion for my cousin Conrad, and ends by swearing that we should never meet again; avows his intention to send Molly away; swears that I should never see Conrad again, unless I would promise to return to my husband, love him, and behave myself as a

chaste, obedient wife should do. He opened the book, and said, "See the sacred Word of God. Swear!" I turned my eyes mechanically to the page; they fell on the words, "Swear not at all." I pointed it out to my poor violent, passionate father. An involuntary oath escaped him. "Obstinate fool! This is enough to break up our compact. Weak, superstitious thing that you are about that book!" I rose to leave the room. "Sit down, madam; you leave me not until you have promised."

Nurse came to the door. "Miss Pet, your mother want to see you one minit."

"I will return, sir, anon," said I.

On our way, Molly said, "Now, honey, you jis go to John Glencoe's room; I reckon he won't 'noy you much at first with his deceipt; but go any how, and stay till tea time, and do like you gwine make up with him; then I'll git you out the scrape to-night."

When I met my mother, she looked frightened out of her wits.

"O child, for the love of heaven, go back to your room; I really believe they will murder us both."

"I am going, dear mamma. Do not let this distress you." After talking a short time, I went back to my father.

"I hope, madam, you are ready to return to the honest, affectionate man who honors you with the title of wife."

"I am ready to obey you, sir."

"Then retire at once, and let me hear of no more scenes."

I found Mr. Glencoe sitting there reading. He met me at the door, took my hand, and did look very penitent, as he said, "Anna, may I hope that I shall ever be forgiven? Can a lifetime of remorse purchase your pardon? Will such devotion, love, and service as were never dreamed of by woman, or witnessed in man, at last win me a little place in your heart?" All this time we had stood,

he still holding my hand. Now he attempted to draw me to him.

I jerked away as if I had felt the sting of a viper. "Sit there," said I, pointing to a chair at some distance from me, and I seated myself opposite to him.

"Oh, I can't blame you. I have been worse than a savage."

"Yes," said I, abstractedly, "yes, I know; I can't get over it all at once. My head is still very sore."

He threw himself down before me and clasped my knees, caught my hands and kissed them like some half-demented lover—implored me with frantic voice and manner to receive him again into favor.

Oh, how I hated him! Nay, despised him. My loathing amounted to madness. I felt if I were compelled to endure that man's embraces again, I should become a maniac. Anything else; the cloister, the grave, a strange country, the north or south pole, anything but to be pressed to the bosom of that petty tyrant, that puling lover, that disgustingly uxorious husband, and jealous monster. I said to him, "If you will give me time; but you must not force this thing upon me now. Time is your best advocate in this miserable business."

A servant hands him a card. "My wife," said he, "a few friends wish me to meet them at the club. Promise me that I shall find you here when I return. Shall I, dear wife?"

"If you do not come too early. I am obliged to be with my grandmother for several hours. At what time will you be here?"

"I fear not before one o'clock. Will that do?"

"Yes," said I, and he attempted to kiss my lips. Had the rotary motion of the earth depended on it, had I known that I should have been murdered on the spot, I could not have prevented that shudder and recoil.

"Well," said he again, "I can not blame you." So he left.

I met him again at tea, but he and my father both seemed pre-occupied. Greatly to my relief, there was no conversation. After supper, they rose to depart. My husband came to me, and with a sickening display of fondness, kissed me on the forehead, and said, "I will be the first to leave, my love." And they left together.

On going up stairs, I met Molly. She handed me a note.

"DEAR MARIANNA — Come to the grotto an hour from this time. I shall be there. It is important to our mutual safety that we meet without loss of time. The evenings are cool, my love, therefore put on a thick dress, lest you take cold. Molly will come with you. Fail not to meet me. God bless you till then. C. C. M."

I passed into my mother's room. I felt a premonition that I should embrace her to-night for the last time. I kissed her over and over again ; I bathed her hands with my tears ; I knelt by her bedside ; I invoked blessings on her head. I was overwhelmed with grief.

"My poor, dear pet lamb, why are you so distressed ? Do you then dislike him so much ?" said she, not divining the true cause.

"Oh yes, mamma, he abuses me."

Some one touched my shoulder.

"How ?" said my mother.

Another pressure. I looked up ; it was my nurse. I knew what it meant. I got up, embraced her tenderly again and again, and left the room. I never saw her afterward. When I entered my room, I found Molly there. She said if I were going to see my cousin Conrad, I had better put on the dress which she held in her hand. It was a traveling habit. I was very passive, objected to nothing. She attired me as she chose ; then throwing a mantle around me, tied on my bonnet. I

scarcely noticed these preparations at the time. Then we passed from the house, as before.

A rapid walk of a few moments brought us to the place of rendezvous. My cousin was already there. His manner was very serious, nay solemn; there was no rapture, no caress; but taking me by the hand, said in a voice equally impressive, "My love, will you consent to place yourself under my protection? Can you trust me? And are you willing to submit to my guidance?"

"O my cousin, for life and death! I can not return to the arms of that monster and live. I have left my home forever!"

"Then we will lose no time. Molly, give the signal." A low whistle brought a carriage to the place. I was penetrated with a tenfold love and gratitude on finding that my nurse was to accompany me. How considerate, how delicate was this attention. I could only press his hand, and weepingly tell him so. We sped on, on. Presently we stopped, but only for a moment, until fresh horses were brought. Then onward again.

About midnight, we arrived at a depot, but learned that the cars had been thrown from the track, and we could not proceed for several hours. This was a serious annoyance to my cousin, but there was no help. Therefore we would rest during this interval in the little inn parlor.

It was a still, peaceful hour. The moon shone gently into the room. The little piece of tallow candle allotted to us by our penurious landlord had long since burned out; but that stream of calm, beautiful light from heaven, that moonbeam, revealed every object distinctly to view. I was sleeping, at least I was reposing, I know not whether I was really wrapped in slumber, but I know that I was oblivious of all care, anxiety, and fear.

Suddenly, there was a commotion in the house, a trampling of feet in the hall, and suppressed voices. The landlord, holding a candle, entered, followed by five or six

men. I looked up and saw my father and my husband. The others were coarse, ruffianly-looking men, whom I had never seen.

My cousin had sprung to his feet, on this unceremonious intrusion on the privacy of travelers. In an instant I saw him close with two men. A fierce struggle ensued. My husband goes up, and aims a blow with his open palm on his face, saying, "Dastard! Caitiff! Craven churl!" Conrad tore himself from the grasp of three stout men, and felled my husband to the earth. In a second, another ruffian had measured his length, then the remaining three closed with him. In a short time I heard the report of a pistol, and then I thought I saw my cousin fall. I closed my eyes.

"Unmanly, cowardly varlets, unhand him!" cried a Stentor-like voice. "How! three men to hold and bind one gentleman? Unhand him, I say, or by the eternal world! your brains shall stain these boards. This revolver carries six missives of death. Refuse to set him free, and I will pull this trigger, and this, and this, which each time will send to hell a poltroon, more low and base than any there. Ha! ropes! Aye! they were spun for you—for such dogs as ye are, and not for him. Do you hear me? cut these thongs."

He held the terrible instrument of death aloft, and is aiming at the head of one of these wretched excuses for men. He is in the act of firing, when Molly and the carriage-driver rush into the room with sticks, tongs, poker, etc. She called out, "Don't, dont shoot! Mas'r Walter Jocelyn, don't shoot! Bless God! there is trouble enough in the world a'ready, 'thout killing 'em quite!"

By this time they had released Conrad. My father has hold of me. I open my eyes—God help me! My husband has gotten up. Another pistol is fired. I hear a suppressed groan. I hear, see, feel, no more —

When I recovered from my swoon, I found myself lying on a little lounge, in a low, gloomy room. I am quite alone. There is not one familiar object on which my eye falls. The impulse is to shriek out for help, for I am almost dying of thirst.

Presently my father enters with refreshments, water, ice-lemonade, etc. After I have drunk, he sits down by me, and takes my hand. "Marianna, wretched, wretched child! with all your soul-destroying sins, I am sorry for you! But you have entailed disgrace on yourself and family forever. You have sinned, I fear, beyond redemption! *You* need never pray more! I will send father Anselmo to you. Then unburden your crime-stained conscience to him, and ask his intercession with the mother of Christ, for the remission of your sins."

"Hold! sir. You do surely rave. You know not what you say. It was not thus the immaculate Jesus talked to sinners. He did not employ such language even to the woman who was brought to him in the Temple."

"Hardened wanton! There is nothing on record in that New Testament, of any such crime as yours. Poor wretch!"

"Then, what is it, sir? With what do you charge me that you do not yourself do almost daily?"

"Miserable creature! Then are you so steeped in sin? From your cradle, your propensities have run in that same channel. I have warned you—I have separated you—I have watched you night and day—done all that a mortal man could do to save you from this GHASTLY crime."

"My father! Now I know that you are mad! Think of your own dalliance—your long-standing intrigue with Mrs. Murray, to the total neglect of my weak, unoffending mother. You know I have committed no such crime."

"O God! this is too dreadful; I must not listen to her," said he, covering his face with his hands, and seeming to weep.

"What is it then, sir? what is it you think I have done? tell me at once, torture me no longer with suspense."

"Know, then, wretched, lost girl, that you have the crime of incest on your soul."

I sprang to my feet. "How? how is this?" shrieked I; "by heavens! I will not hear my chaste and innocent mother slandered. It is false! false as hell! where only such a horrible idea could have originated. I am your daughter, sir. Would to God! I were not."

"Yes, you are my daughter, Marianna Glencoe. You are indeed my daughter, and I echo your own words—would to God! you were not!" Then he passed his hand over his face, and looking at me fixedly, with a mournful, despairing look, said, "And HE is my SON! Thus you have the dreadful sin of incest on your soul."

I fell with my face on the floor (which was of brick), and the blood gushed from my nose and mouth. He attempted to raise me. I shrieked out, and recoiled from his touch. As often as he approached me, I uttered piercing screams, and signed him away. I prayed now for insanity. I implored God to send his thunderbolts and destroy me; and if not so, then to destroy my memory. I know not who comes or goes. I hear a sound as of the opening and shutting of doors. I do not look up. I am on my knees, with my head bowed to the earth, my forehead resting on the bare bricks.

Father Anselmo comes in. He speaks soothingly to me. He does not chide or abuse. He bids me look up and hope. I cry out, "I can not! I dare not! my father says I have committed an unpardonable sin!"

"Not so, my child; you can repent. Confess, and then repent."

"Too late! too late! I am lost! lost! lost! —— But, father, I was tempted beyond human strength, unaided, to resist. I was goaded on by wrongs, railings, false accusations, and at last, violence. I have received many indignities, and even *blows*. I have been driven from one step to another, from one fault to another, without any solace; and getting to loathe the author of these troubles, I, at last, took refuge in that manly bosom. O father, if you but knew him, as I do! So noble, so exalted, so handsome, and" ——

"Hush, daughter! breathe not another word in that strain. I came here to meet you at the confessional, and to make what intercession I can with God! through our Mother and her blessed Son."

Then I knelt before that holy father, that man of God; I confessed my sins of omission, and commission; I laid bare my most secret thoughts to the scrutiny of his discerning mind. I threw open the portals of my heart. He is made acquainted with every thought, desire, and emotion which had actuated me throughout.

When I had finished, he shook his head, and I shrieked out, rising from my knees, "Do you, too, say, knowing all, that I'm lost?"

"Far from it! Poor dove! the hawks have pursued and driven thee into the only shelter open to thy weary stricken wing. It was thy refuge; God takes cognizance of the necessities of his children."

I fell again on my knees, seized his hands, and repeated with great enthusiasm, "And He will bless thee! thou gentle vicegerent of the meek and lowly child Jesus."

We heard distinctly a low cough, and, in an instant, Father Anselmo's manner changed. He did not look alarmed, but disconcerted.

"Daughter, the blood of Christ cleanseth from every sin. But you must do penance."

"Impose it, father; I am ready for all things, even death."

"We do not arrogate to ourselves the right either to give or take life. We impose a penance on the body to save the soul, but we wish to preserve it alive."

"Go on, father," said I, still on my knees. "I am waiting to hear my doom."

"Well, daughter, we wish you to go through the most solemn adjuration (my father enters at this moment) that you will never look upon, or permit him to look upon your face; that you will not speak to, write, or receive letters from, or in any way hold intercourse and communication with your BROTHER."

At that word, I uttered a piercing cry, and fell with my face again on the bricks. After a while, he raised my head very gently, and then went on: "You will return to your husband. You will, by every dutiful attention and humble obedience, make atonement for this false step. Will you swear to perform these duties, kissing the Holy Bible?"

"No, no! a thousand times no!" said I, springing to my feet. "I will never again live with John Glencoe as his wife. I will not do such violence to all honesty and truth. I will not again be tempted to desecrate sacred things. I will not outrage my own nature so much. Never can I be convinced that it is my duty to maintain a relation with any man or woman, the existence of which makes me a loathing to myself—so fills me with cold despair, that I can not even pray to God—so takes away all self-respect, that I am fain to cower in the presence of my more fortunate sisters, as a thing defiled, and to cry like the leper, 'Unclean! unclean!'" He commenced a remonstrance.

"Stop!" said I, "this is needless; I can not be turned."

"She says truly," added my father. "That is impossible; I know it to my sorrow. You may break her spirit, but you can never bend her will. Administer the first part of the adjuration."

This was now done, with a great show of solemnity. I was then made to kiss the sacred volume, and to put my name to the instrument of writing. He (the priest) went through a form of prayer, and I was left alone. I got up from my knees, and commenced pacing round and round the room. I caught myself saying, "Brother! Dear brother! Ha! ha! ha! Come! we'll travel on. Aye! Yes, so merrily round and round." Then the feeling came on me to flee away—I wanted space—I wanted air—I wanted to shout; and I did cry out, "Brother! brother!" Then the room swam round and round.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE JOURNAL—THE MANIAC MOTHER.

“SHE looked on many a face with vacant eye,
On many a token without knowing why.”

“Then fresh tears stood on her cheeks, as doth the honey-dew
Upon the gathered lily almost withered.”

“NURSE,” said the doctor, “raise her head, and let us pour down a little of this gruel. Poor thing! would that I could relieve her. Would that one ray of reason would beam from those gentle, plaintive, deep, dark-blue eyes. I sometimes think she understands me.” Then, agreeable to the long-established custom of the place, I call in Dr. Severe, and the poor creature hides her face and becomes so terrified and shrieks out so fearfully, that I believe what little dawning of light there might be, is scared away. After that, she sinks into the same lethargic state.”

“No wonder,” says the woman. “Poor dove! how can she help it, when he is so cross? Then Dr. Stern and old Mrs. Hardheart—the three are enough to squeeze or scare the soul out of anybody’s body, with their strait-jacket and sour looks.”

“Is the poor bird asleep now?” said the humane doctor.

“Yes, I think so. Myra! Myra!” I would not open my eyes, because I wanted to hear more. I had only heard enough to mystify me. The woman continued:

“It is strange that we have never heard from the old man since he brought her here. What a bad countenance he had; that old Jew! How he grinned and smirked around the poor demented creature! He looked better sometimes; and I thought a gleam of pity was

about to break out on that old wrinkled-up, parchment face; then that hideous leer and libidinous grin would supersede every other human expression."

"Strange that none ever came to inquire about her," said the woman.

• "Martha, don't you think she is very beautiful?"

"Yes, if she had any sense, and a little bit of light in her eyes."

"I think, without doubt, she is the most beautiful woman I ever beheld. Her features are faultless; but, as you say, she lacks the soul peeping from the windows of that perfect piece of workmanship," he rejoined.

"Do they still send the remittance, by which softening influence the horrors of this purgatory are somewhat mitigated?"

"Punctually, up to last quarter. They are in arrears for that."

"Then God help the poor soul, say I. How long has she been here?"

"Two years and a half. Nay, more; in three months it will have been three years since she came. The child will be"—

I started up wildly, and so suddenly that they were alarmed. "What! What do I hear? Then it was not all a dream?"

I would have gone on to say much more, but the physician of whom they had spoken entered at that moment. He came up to the bedside, and scowling on me from under those dark, shaggy brows, said in a sort of growl, "What's all this? What's this uproar about?" I gave him one startled, timid look, and began to shriek at the top of my voice. He grew angry. He was (as I afterward learned) morbidly sensitive about his personal appearance. To me he was hideously ugly. In my poor benighted mind I associated him with my own sorrows; and with crime, treachery, and despotism generally. The

mere sight of him, as the good Doctor Goodwin had said, never failed to put out every glimmer of dawning light in my mind. This time I retained some of my faculties, and heard him say in the same low voice, between a hiss and a growl, "I wish I were rid of her. I'm heartily tired of such scenes. I wonder why an all-wise Providence suffers such a poor, troublesome thing to live. John you must exercise more rigor. I always notice, when you and Martha have charge of this ward, that you spoil her by indulgence. Then when I come in, and look at her only, she yells out in that way—just like a trifling house-dog, whose tail has been trodden on. To-morrow you must exchange with Doctor Stern, and old Mrs. Hard-heart. They will bring her to her good behavior. In the meantime put on the strait-jacket; and let her regimen be a crust and a glass of water a day. I shall call at eight o'clock to-night, to see that you have properly obeyed my instructions."

"But, sir," said the young man, "if when you come she meets that piercing glance with which you are enabled to quell the maniacs, will you not then relax your treatment?"

"Oh, of course. For forty years, I have ruled the subjects of a lunatic asylum by a glance of my eye, and in no instance did I ever fail to silence yelling save in this one. Hers commences where theirs ends." He gave some other directions to the subordinates, and then left.

I lay with my eyes shut, still and silent as if I were dead; this state always succeeded to the excited one. The young man now sat down by me, felt my pulse, and laid his hand on my heart.

"Martha, have you ever known this poor lady to weep?"

"No, sir; never. I have sometimes thought she looked pitiful-like when I would steal in here between times to bathe her head and loosen that jacket, as if she wanted

to cry, only her eyes were so dry they wouldn't furnish tears. Oh! I had forgotten! That invention of the fiends must be used. I dread to do it; I would rather be put into it myself than again to bind it on those slender, polished limbs. But I must obey old Merciless, else would he have us whisked out of our places in no time."

Then they crept quietly from the room. I was left alone, and I could now think a little. I could recall some events; but I could yet understand nothing beyond that I was in a madhouse. All else seemed dim and shadowy. I remembered nothing clearly. I had a vivid impression of an accumulation of horrors. My sore, tired limbs could attest to cruelty of treatment. My bloodless, attenuated hands and arms revealed a tale of hard usage, meager fare, and sickness.

I lay there and thought. I tried so hard to comprehend, while I explored the darkened chambers of memory; but alas! its stores were locked up. They spoke of a child! What was it? I felt a thrill of strange and mingled emotions, new to me. Ah! yes, new, or if not new, then so long ago felt, that I have forgotten what they are. Is it delight I feel? Is it gladness? O my God! what is it? My heart beats so quickly and loudly that I think one without the door might hear it. Child! did they say? I remember something about a little, soft wail, a tiny voice. O my Father in heaven! Now it is going; I feel my mind receding; I know it! I know it! I lay a long time quite still, struggling with recollection. I felt weary and sleepy, but I feared to close my eyes, lest oblivion should come over me, and I should never be able again to call up that tiny, shadowy face, and that low, breeze-like, wailing voice.

The key grates harshly in the door; I look up and see the humane Doctor Goodwin, and meet the compassionate eye of the good Martha.

I sat up in my bed and said, "Come here, and tell me

all about it. Now don't cross me, or say a word that will be hard to understand." I saw them exchange pleased looks of surprise. "In the first place, can you keep that dreadful old man away? If he comes back, it will all be put out again, like a candle blown upon by the breath. Then I know not that your gentle voice and kind hand can relume the spark."

"Dear lady," said he, "I am so delighted to hear you talk thus, that I can scarce refrain from shouting for joy." And the tender-hearted young man took out his handkerchief and wiped his eyes.

"Ah!" said I, "tears! tears! Would that I could weep too. As dew is to the withered flower, so are tears to the parched and dried heart. I used to weep a great deal, shed many tears; but they were forced back to their fountain, where they congealed, and now they are consolidated, and have formed a wall round about my heart, which is stone. Yes indeed, my heart, this heart which was so tender and loving, and so easily moved, is now all marble."

"Can you not tell us of the things which used to make you weep?"

"Ah no! there is no feeling or memory left. All has been crushed out; that horrible engine of torture which you hold in your hand (and a sharp shudder passed through my frame), has left nothing."

"We will never use this again," said he, throwing it across the room. "Come, tell us of your joys and sorrows, before you came here."

"Before I came here? Have I not been here always? Is not my being here coeval with time?"

"Ah!" said he, sorrowfully, "she wanders again. I am so disappointed."

I lay for some time quite still. Then I passed my hands over my face. "I am not so wrong here as you

think," said I, touching my forehead. "But my memory is so bad. That's all."

"Well, Martha, I believe there is a great deal of truth in that."

He then proceeded to ask me several numbers in the multiplication table. He propounded some other simple questions in mental arithmetic. Finally, he gave me a book, which I read without effort. He then asked me the subject of what I had read. I did not know. He looked distressed. Seeing this, I told him I had not been thinking of it, else I would have known. But when he would have proposed another page, I pushed the volume away, saying, "You want me to do too much at first. You see I am now like a little child." And I closed my eyes.

They seemed to think I slept, for they commenced talking without reserve. "I thought, Martha," said the doctor, "that we were about to be rewarded for our long and weary vigils; but now I fear there is no hope of a permanent restoration. Her intellect became clouded again. I saw it while she spoke."

"I think you are mistaken," said Martha. "I think she wearied, and her memory refused to aid her, and this caused perplexity. If we could only get her to weep, then all would come right."

I opened my eyes, and in an instant he darted a keen and searching glance into them. I smiled, and asked, "Can you read it? Can you read the *one* idea which pervades my poor benighted mind?"

"No; what is it? I see there is something new, because you smile. I have never seen such a soft, bland, genial smile in this house before."

I raised myself, and placing my head on my hand, said, "You wish me to weep. I heard you say so. Well, I could have wept an hour ago: I could weep now, would

you but tell me"—and I caught his hand and pressed it with energy.

"Be composed; just quiet yourself, dear lady, and I will tell you everything on God's earth you may choose to ask me." Martha now gave me something mixed in a glass, which helped to quiet me, and I proceeded.

"I heard you speak of a little child, a babe, and I have some vague idea of the presence of one at some time or other. Tell me about it. Do not fear that it will excite me. It is the struggle to recollect, and the hard, unyielding memory which distracts me. If you can save me this conflict, I shall soon recover health, both of body and mind."

"Well, lie down quietly, and we will answer your questions. Now commence."

"Of what child did you speak? Tell me this, first of all."

"Now, you are springing up again," said the doctor.

"It is your child," rejoined Martha, no longer able to keep silence, while the doctor held me down with a gentle force. "It is your own dear little boy, and the most beautiful little cretur that ever your eyes ever rested upon, I know."

"Mine? My child? Oh yes! I remember. Go on," cried I.

"He is over two years old now, and"—

"Where is he? Oh! I thought so. This pining—this inappeasable yearning of my soul—I thought there was a cause for it. Shall I ever see him? Why is he not left with his mother?"

"Oh you were sick, and we thought it better to put him out to nurse. We were afraid you would kill him." I saw Dr. Goodwin look quickly up at her. "We were afraid you would love him to death, and kill him with kindness."

"But I will not be so bad, now. Just let me see him, dear good friends!" said I.

"Yes, if, when Dr. Severe comes you will not hide your face, and shriek out as if you saw old Sooty, and beheld his cloven foot. You excite his ire by doing this."

"When will he come again?"

"Immediately; I think as soon as I inform him of your improved condition, he will come in to see if I have reported truly."

They then went out, and I closed my eyes, that I could the better enjoy the beautiful day dream of a bright little boy, two years old, or more. I did not observe that they had returned to the cell, until that coarse, growling voice sounded; then I started up, opened my eyes, and a sharp shudder passed through my frame, but I did not scream out. I subdued this impulse, and now I could look at him, and reply to his questions, without evidencing horror. He called me by a strange name.

"Mrs. Wise, how do you feel, now?" and he also darted his keen glances into my eyes.

I did not quail this time, but met the look calmly. Then taking his hand, I said: "I fear, doctor, I am, and have been, for a long time, very troublesome. I hope you will forgive me. I am grateful for whatever kindness you have shown me."

"Oh, don't mention it, madam;" and he fidgeted about in his chair. He then, again, peered keenly into my eyes, as he continued to speak. "Now, would you like to have something good and nice to eat?"

I was about to decline, but receiving the sign from Dr. Goodwin, I said, "Yes."

The old doctor gave a low, chuckling sort of laugh, as he added,

"Well! this is the only sensible word I have ever heard her utter. In three whole years she has never spoken to

the point before. John order whatever she fancies, and put away that thing there," pointing to the strait-jacket. "We will have no further use for it in this cell," and he left.

"You have played your part admirably," said the humane doctor. "As soon as you have eaten, I will bring the little Clarence."

In a short time, a nice broiled bird, a biscuit, and a glass of wine were placed before me; then they went to bring my child. I thought of getting up and making an elaborate toilet to receive the little stranger; but on looking round, I saw nothing but the blank walls, the cot I lay on, and a shower-bath—not so much as a piece of looking-glass as big as my hand. I had no wardrobe. I wore a coarse calico blouse. When I put my hand to my head, I learned, for the first time, that my fine suit of hair had been shorn off. I had no idea of my present appearance; no recollection of my former; had not seen my face for years.

I hear footsteps in the corridor, and a sweet bird-like voice. I hear it caroling so sweetly. The door opens, I spring to meet my child with a glad shout. I seize him, but O God! he turns away from his mother, and hides his darling little face on Martha's shoulder. I cry out, in anguish, "My Father in heaven! this is more than I can bear! He turns away loathingly from me, his own mother!"

"My good woman, you have frightened him, that's all," said Martha. "He'll look up directly, and come to you."

I drop down on my bed. The Doctor takes the child and walks across the room several times, talking soothingly to him; then sits down by me, and says, "Now, Clarence, go to mamma."

The bright, glorious creature, looks up. I hold out my hands timidly; he meets them with his own tiny fingers; then bounds into my arms. I fold him to my breast, I cover his face with kisses; he places his little hands on

my cheeks, and looks, baby as he is, inquiringly into my eyes, and then puts his head down lovingly on my neck ; I feel as if my pent-up feelings, my full soul, would kill me, that I should die of excessive happiness. But with this feeling, I experienced the intensest pain. So great was the tension, that one more strain, and the chord of life had snapped.

But God put one word into the mouth of that child—the first one his sweet lips had ever lisped—and it saved me. “Mamma,” said the cherub, laying his little cheek to mine.

Then I burst into tears. Oh ! how refreshing, how revivifying, were those drops ! delicious tears ! exquisite emotions ! I wept long. I pressed the child to my withered heart, and I could feel verdure spring up under it. Those tears—the renovation of hope—with that life-giving little form, had wrought a miracle. With that moment my present existence commenced, my mind began to expand and receive impressions, to conceive and mature ideas. Memory a little more obdurate ; was now, too, unfolding her portals. My nerves were newly strung. In fact, my whole system, mental and corporeal, was undergoing, and subject to, a marvelous sanatory influence.

Then I had the child with me all the time, only when the kind-hearted Martha would take him out for exercise ; still my condition—now that I had the power to see the naked realities—was most dismal. I occupied the same cell, without furniture or clothes, save the coarse change allotted to the indigent inmates. But finding me so much improved, the superintendent is soon induced to listen to the suggestions of my friend, Doctor Goodwin, and my condition is ameliorated ; I have better clothes, a few articles of furniture, and some conveniences. I am allowed to exchange the maniac’s cell for a room larger, and better ventilated ; I am also permitted to accompany

Martha and the child in their walks. My health is restored. God, doubtless, for his own wise purposes, and I hope, for his own glory, has given me back my faculties. My memory has at last been aroused from its long sleep. I am capable of reasoning, comparing, and recalling. I remember events of childhood, girlhood, womanhood. Have a vivid remembrance of joys and griefs. But I can call up nothing from the chaotic, vasty deep of memory, since the fearful scene in that low, gloomy room, with my father and the priest, father Anselmo.

One day, when I was wandering through the grove with the little Clarence (he had been named by Doctor Goodwin after himself; and from regard to him, and in honor to his virtues, I let the name remain ; I wished to have called him Conrad, but I forbore to speak), we were joined by this gentleman. After the usual salutations were over, I asked him if he had the privilege of answering me a few questions, on one or two subjects which were consuming me. He assented. I then inquired if they had not been informed of my real name and family by the person who brought me there. He said not ; and went on to state, that I came in a close, private carriage, with a mean, cringing-looking old man, and a little negro girl, with very straight hair (remarkable circumstance for an African) ; that I was at the time of my arrival, quite deranged — a raving maniac. There had been a sum of money placed in the hands of the keeper, which had long since been expended ; but from time to time, there were other remittances from unknown sources.

Then I told him my history, from my cradle up, only suppressing some of the most painful facts. When I had finished, he seemed again to doubt my sanity — deeming the fearful story to be more like the distempered ebullitions of the lunatic than aught else. However, he was too good-hearted to report me on the sick-list again.

Time drags on slowly in this emporium of misery. My

child is now four years old. Since my recovery I have written a great many letters to my mother, father, young Walter, my grandmother, and even to my nurse (negro as she is). I received no replies. I never did write to my husband; I never thought of doing so. I felt, to be one moment in his presence would drive me mad again. I would have preferred any fate—a pauper's, an exile's, to be sold into slavery even, anything—to being claimed as his wife. I would have fled and perished in the woods, rather than have looked on his face fifteen minutes, much less endure for years that daily death.

At last Doctor Goodwin received a letter, enclosing a large sum of money for my use. The author begs to be informed of the exact condition of my health. Her signature is simply Leah. She wished to be addressed by that name only, and the letter directed to the care of one Murdoch.

When he handed me this document he gave me the money also. "You can take charge of your own funds, Mrs. Wise. I pronounce you to be, in all things, capable of thinking and acting for yourself. I would advise you, though, to take rooms in the 'Boarding-House' appertaining to the Asylum, and draw around you such comforts as money can always procure. I do not think, that I would let the child come into the Hospital. His mind might become tinctured with the gloomy horrors which pervade the place."

I took his advice. Selected two large rooms and furnished them handsomely, nay, magnificently. Then bought genteel mourning clothes for myself; and was guilty of the vanity of dressing my child richly. I procured the finest and most costly material, and had it made up in a tasteful, elegant style. Long before that sum of money was exhausted, another supply came from the same source.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE JOURNAL.—OLD FRIENDS AND FOES.

“I HAD so fixed my heart upon her,
That wheresoe’er I framed a scheme of life
For time to come, she was my only joy.”

FIVE years and more have now passed away. I say five, because I date everything from the birth of my child. He is exquisitely beautiful, and so much like *him*; but I must not think of this. God pity me! One day I sat dreaming over a book, as I watched the mirthful gambols of my boy.

The servant entered, and said there was an old lady and a young gentleman below, wishing to see me. I rang for my own servant, and giving the child into her charge, with a heart palpitating with fear and curiosity, ran down. Imagine my joy and astonishment to meet my good Walter and my own dear old grandmother.

Let me not attempt a description of the scene which ensued, or of my feelings. I took them up to my rooms, and after we had gazed at each other in speechless rapture, and had indulged ourselves in as many incoherent exclamations of love, joy, surprise, and indignation as was needful, my grandmother, who possessed great practicality, suggested the necessity of rest and refreshment; after which, I learned the following facts: I found that they had never known of my whereabouts, in fact, of my existence, until three days before. My father, my poor, misguided father, was dead. On his deathbed he revealed to Doctor Walter Jocelyn, then his partner, the secret of my existence, and my cruel incarceration. He stated that these facts were known only to himself and the old Jew

who had carried me off. That everybody thought me dead.

When Walter expressed his amazement in such strong terms as, "Why, sir, how can this be? We saw her bier by the side of her mother's; saw them lowered into the same grave. Then their obituaries went forth to the world together. The same proud monument consecrates the memory of both mother and child;" then the dying man wrung his hands and cried out:

"Oh yes; O God! But why dwell on it with such torturing emphasis and minuteness? I would give my right arm, my right eye, nay both, and go forth to the darkened world maimed and hideous, with the prospect of being then cursed with long life, if I had not connived at that diabolical plot, that awful crime. I have been a dupe, Walter. For years I have been a machine in the hands of a woman, who is at the same time the very worst and greatest, as well as the most seductive and wicked creature that ever came from the hands of a pure and holy Creator. She is the subtlest schemer, the deepest plotter, the most alluring and selfish of women. I have suffered myself, dotard as I was, to be ruled like a child, or an imbecile man. She drew me on sometimes by blandishments; at other times, goaded me to desperation by threats of banishment from her presence. My infatuation then was so great that I could not exist long away from her. In this way she impelled me on to the commission of those awful, hell-deserving crimes toward my own child. It was to purchase permission to see her whenever I pleased, that I consented to my daughter's being buried alive in a mad house. And afterward, that fraud was practiced upon the public, that mock funeral.

"It occurred in this way, Jocelyn; I wish you to mark my words," said my father. "Mrs. Murray had employed a miserable old Jew to poison this girl, so as to have her forever out of the way of her son. Well, this old fiend was ready for every crime for the sake of compensation,

except to take life. He was a coward by nature, and as superstitious as he was craven. He would not murder, because it was written in the decalogue, ‘Thou shalt not kill,’ and his timid nature feared as the acme of human woe, a visitation from the phantom of the murdered body. Therefore, I consented that he should carry her off in that mysterious way.”

My father made Walter promise that as soon as the funeral was over, he would set out for this institution. As there were none left, but my grandmother, of all our kindred, she came with him.

He further stated, that my poor father had been insolvent for many years, and was for some time before his death reduced to very necessitous circumstances. After my supposed death, John Glencoe had withdrawn entirely from him. “This,” said Walter, “seemed to be an unceasing cause of heart-burning. He continued to cry to the last, ‘Oh ! I did it for them ; I did all this great amount of wickedness for them ; and now they have both deserted me. That woman, for whom I made these sacrifices, and forfeited everything, sits at home in regal splendor, while I have not the means to secure to myself a decent burial.’ Then he would gnash his teeth and heap imprecations on his own head and theirs. In this frame of mind and temper he died.”

“Poor father ! poor deluded man !” cried I, and I paid the tribute of genuine sorrow to his memory. I then begged Walter to tell me what transpired at the inn on the roadside.

It seems, after I had swooned in my father’s arms, I was carried by Molly and placed in the carriage. Previous to that, the reader will remember, there had been a shot, which in my distraction I thought was fired by my husband, and had taken effect on my cousin. I even believed I heard his death groans. But not so ; it was an accidental shot which was lodged in the shoulder of one

of the ruffians. My husband was injured by a blow from that Herculean hand. My cousin had also received a wound in the breast, from some assassin's knife. They were unable to proceed, so were carried to their rooms.

Three days after, Conrad received a challenge, and the parties met the day following, with deadly intent; Walter being my cousin's second. He stated that when Murray took his station on the ground, he would have furnished the finest study for the artist, as the personification of cool, calm valor. He was very pale, and there was an undressed wound on his forehead, which was slightly bleeding. His left arm was in a sling, and he held the fatal instrument in the right. The ground was measured; they were to walk ten paces, then turn and fire. 'Tis done! Conrad received the shot of Mr. Glencoe in his side, having discharged his own in the air. He falls—his antagonist, with his friends, hurry off the ground.

Soon after, their vehicles were heard driving furiously away. Conrad was taken back to the house. On the way he fainted several times; and during the operation of extracting the ball, he was extremely ill. Six months he was confined to his bed in that country inn. When he arose from his sick couch, his first thought, his only inquiry, was, for his cousin Marianna. When he had learned her fate, he paid one visit to the pure white marble slab on which her name and early passage to the world of spirits were recorded. Seventeen! Only ten and seven brief years, and that bright vision has passed away! He turned off, a stricken man. A hasty and almost silent adieu to his mother—a few hurried leave-takings—one fervent embrace of his little daughter—and he is gone.

Walter ceased speaking, to gaze at me. My whole frame was shaken by the wildest agitation. "Go on! go on! dear friend," cried I.

He resumed, but in an altered voice. "When we hear of him again, he has joined the expedition to Mexico.

Then we are informed of his unparalleled bravery, and his promotion from grade to grade until he reached that of colonel at the end of the campaign. He was as much honored and beloved for his benevolence and great humanity toward his own men and the soldiers generally, as for his personal prowess. He had the confidence and respect of the officers, and was consulted and looked up to in the camp and on the field.

"At the end of the war, he returned home. In the mean time, his mother, with the little Genevieve, had removed to a distant city. Prompted perhaps by caprice, or may be by the goadings of conscience—or more likely by some secret infernal interest—he joined her there. Further than this, I know nothing," said Walter, gloomily.

I then inquired about my nurse. That good, upright woman—the faithful, honest slave—the consistent, steadfast friend, Aunt Molly. Neither he nor my grandmother knew; but thought she had been sent to some one of John Glencoe's plantations. She had never been seen since those disastrous times.

Glencoe himself went abroad; but they had recently seen his name on the list of arrivals in the port of New York.

Several days passed away quickly and cheerfully. We are devising ways and means to live. Walter proposes that we shall go to some new place, and all live together. He thinks his practice can be made commensurate to our wants.

I accede to this, but my dear, shrewd, far-seeing grandmother says nothing, but rocks herself with great energy. We are again alone.

"Marianna," says my grandmother, "what are you thinking about, thus so heedlessly to consent to that young man's proposals? Do you want to be principal actor in another tragedy?"

"Why, dear mother, you speak in enigmas. I thought

Walter Jocelyn one of the best and most honorable of men."

"He may be so. I presume he is so, my child; but don't you see that he is madly in love with you?"

"O grandma, this is silly in you. I am sorry to hear you, who never talk nonsense, say so. Think you anybody could love me after witnessing the past? No, no! dear mother, you do but flatter your child, and wrong him."

"Well, we will see ere long. I know more than you are aware of."

When he came the next morning, instead of coming to my sitting-room, he sent his name up, saying he was obliged to see me a moment alone on business. When I reached the parlor, I found him sunk in reverie. I touched his arm. He rose in embarrassment, blushed like any school-girl, and sitting down by my side, took my hand.

"Marianna, you agreed to my proposal, did you not?" I answered in the affirmative, but told him that my grandmother opposed it.

"She thinks that I can not support you, I suppose?"

"No, that is not it. She thinks it will be tempting the foul tongue of calumny, and wantonly inviting gossip and scandal. She says that we are so young and foolish that it would not"—

"Oh, I can remedy all that," said he, brightening up, while his cheeks are again suffused with a modest blush. "Dear Marianna, I have loved you from the first hour we ever met; and I have, for many years, sought you everywhere, that I might tell you so. I now offer you my young, fresh, loving heart, just to do with as you please. Will you, my dear girl, link your fate with mine? Shall we not then go forth, leaving all troubles, sorrows, and painful memories behind, carve out a new life, and lay the foundation on which your boy shall rear a bril-

liant superstructure? Come, dear one, give yourself to me, that I may nurture and cherish you as a mother would her infant."

"Great God!" cried I, "what do I hear?" I drew my hand from him (which he had seized in his enthusiasm), and exclaimed,

"O Walter! why did you tell me this? Why did you not let me trust and confide in your friendship? I have faith in that. But love! love! Oh, dear friend! I shudder as I pronounce the word! It has brought me all the griefs I have ever known. No, Walter! no, my friend! talk not to me of love! I adore you as the most perfect of friends. But do not talk to me of love, else I shall lose my senses again."

He rose from his seat, and rushed frantically across the room, then dropped into a chair, and covered his face with his hands. After a while he came and sat down by me, looking very pale and melancholy; he gazed at me fixedly as he said:

"Marianna, you will never see *him*, perhaps, again in this life; or if you should chance to meet him, he will be changed. I am told he is addressing a very beautiful heiress, and I think likely you will never see him but to wound you."

"I do not expect it. I pray God I may never see him. I should deem it the greatest misfortune that could befall me. Were he in this room now, I would not look upon his face. I could not do so without sin."

"Then fly with me; let us leave this country, which has proven to be only a vale of tears to us both. We will seek some more consonant sphere of action; when I will make you forget all your griefs, so tenderly will I watch over you."

"Say not another word; never mention the subject again, lest you drive me from my stronghold, my last hope and trust in the friendship of man. Love is selfish!

tell me not of it. I now need the noble disinterestedness of friendship; not love."

He sat down opposite to me—looked very mournfully and strangely into my face for several minutes, without speaking. I inquired the meaning of this look. He replied :

" May God ! help you, then, Marianna ! you will not let me, and I know not to whom else you can turn in this awful exigency."

I became alarmed and greatly agitated, and at last cried out, " In the name of heaven ! what is it ? "

" Your husband is at the hotel, in hot pursuit of you. Last night, I was called from my room to visit a sick traveler. He was in an advanced stage of inebriation, and I was not recognized. In his maudlin garrulousness, I learned that by some unlucky chance he had heard of you, and is here now to claim you."

I was seized with a panic, which almost deprived me of life. Walter walked to and fro in the room, as if regardless of me. Presently I recovered, in some degree, and seizing his hand, I groaned out, " O Walter ! my last, my only friend ! what shall I do ? for the love of Christ, advise me ! "

He answered doggedly—still continuing his walk, " I have already given it, and you reject it. I can offer no other, because that is the only way of escape I see open to you."

" O God ! Can you think of nothing beyond your own selfish gratifications ? your own private feelings and interests ? "

" I have offered you the best advice that I am capable of giving. I have told you of the only plan which suggests itself to me."

" Well ! you can at least tell me all he said, I suppose," added I, bitterly.

" It seems, immediately after his arrival at the old

place, he had been informed, through some mysterious agency, that during his absence you had been an inmate of this establishment, but that you were now entirely restored, and ten times more beautiful than ever. So he has come with carriage and horses, and a friend, to prove your identity, and will claim and take you home with him. This friend is ready to swear to the fact (if you resist), that you were lawfully married, and never divorced. There will be no resisting his claims."

"When will he be here?"

"Just as soon as he gets out of bed."

"Dear Walter! keep him there to-morrow, just to-morrow, and give me a little time to reflect on what you have said."

"Will that benefit me?"

"Ah! self, self again."

"Marianna, I am so disappointed! God knows I desire to do all things right, and would serve you with my life! but I am so cut down, that I will not longer trust myself to talk. Good-by. I will do as you request, and will be here early to-morrow morning." He took my hand, and his was as cold and clammy as a dead man's. I looked up at him with astonishment. He carried it to his forehead, which was also covered with a cold dew.

I told it all to my grandmother; and now her good common sense, decision of judgment, and promptitude of action, are invaluable. She looked compassionately at me, and said, "Well, Marianna, the way is very plain to me; we must fly—fly as much from that hot-headed fool, Walter, as from Glencoe. I saw the moment he laid his eyes on you, how it would be. But there is no time to talk, we must act. Did you tell me Doctor Goodwin was your friend?" I nodded assent.

"Then send for him at once."

When he came, we told him our distressed situation. He replied, "I was on my way to you, when I got your

message. I have this moment returned from the hotel. Mr. Glencoe has seen old Doctor Severe, who is entirely bought over to his interest. I am ordered to make the necessary arrangements; the forms are all settled, and to-morrow morning you are to be yielded up to a besotted, almost idiotic, husband. I am shocked, and deeply pained, by this outrage."

"Then you will help us?" cried I. "We must leave here to-night. Can you lend us your aid?"

"God knows, madam, I would do anything in the world. I would most willingly conduct you to any place of safety that you might suggest; but were I to leave here, it would doubtless lead to your discovery. I should be hunted, the hue and cry would go out; and my presence, however pure my motives, would retard your progress. But there will be no difficulty in leaving the place."

So that night, under cover of a darkened sky, we departed. My property of furniture, books, etc., was left behind. I thought of nothing but the importance of escape. We traveled in the night train: the next night saw us many miles away. The day after, we continued our flight.

At last we became exhausted. My grandmother and the child grew sick; but the hope of being removed beyond *his* reach, sustained me. So we stopped at the Railroad House, in this city. We had no means to pursue our journey further; and our first trouble was a dun from the landlord. Finding our purses incommensurate to the exorbitant demand, he one day informed me that "he wanted his room."

My grandmother was always a great reader of the News. In one of the daily papers, she saw those cheap places advertised. She immediately went out and engaged the hovel.

And now, dear Minny, I have given you a faithful sketch of my past life. I have told you the truth; nothing

extenuating for myself, or aught set down in malice against others. If—now that you have heard the secret cause of this grief, this corroding sorrow—you can still call me friend, and can look upon me as a *lady* worthy of respect, confidence, and esteem; then intimate it, and I will joyfully continue to love you. But if, on the other hand, I am at all fallen in your estimation, then draw off from me, and I shall understand it. I do not feel humbled or degraded toward my fellow worms. God permitted me to be tempted beyond my strength. He suffered this in his wisdom; and sooner or later it will redound to his glory and my good. I feel that he has forgiven me. The upbraidings of conscience, and that stupefying sense of horror which kept me bowed to the earth, have ceased. I have done all I could. I have repented and prayed, and trusted God; and you, dear friend, first taught me to love the Saviour—to seek the Kingdom. I have found it, Minny, and now rest peacefully on the bosom of Christ. I dread no longer. I find, as you told me, that “perfect love casteth out all fear.”

CHAPTER XLIII.

CONSCIENCE, THE ORACLE OF GOD.

"THOUGH thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit may not sleep ;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish."

MINNY had been obliged to retire, on account of the little Myra, but most reluctantly, for she would willingly have set up all night to watch, with the jealous eyes of true friendship, the effect produced on Murray by Myra's journal. When breakfast was announced, Dr. Brown went in the room ; and when he spoke, Murray looked up at him, seeming not to comprehend one word.

"Yes, yes, I know," said he, "but send Mrs. Brown here ; I must see her." The Doctor went back to the breakfast-room, with a very dissatisfied look.

"Wife, I believe Murray is either going to lose his life or his senses over those papers. To all I say, he answers, "Send Minny here ; I must speak with Mrs. Brown," etc.

The good little creature put the child into her grandmother's arms, and ran up to him. "Good heavens, sir, what is the matter ? Ye look the picture o' hopeless misery. I dinna ken what mak's you tak on sae."

He pointed to the adjuration, and to the passage where poor Marianna is accused of that frightful crime ; then closes his eyes, and lets the paper fall from his hands.

"Now listen to me. If ye will get up, and tak' the tepid bath which is made ready for you in the next room, and will then come down to breakfast, wi' a better looking face, I will gie ye a paper that will set a' that to rights.

Your poor mither writ a letter, or rather I writ it while she dictated it. All that trouble will have passed away, when ye ha' read that document. But I will na gie it to ye unless ye do as I have said."

She left him, and when the servant came in to assist him, he allowed himself to be undressed and submerged like one in a trance. After which he descended to the breakfast-room. He sipped a few drops of coffee mechanically. Minny saw this abstraction, and calling him into the parlor, put into his hand the letter of his dying mother. He begged permission to withdraw to his room. When there, he locks the door, sits down, and as he opens the letter, a cold shudder passes over him. He tries to read. "O God! what new horror awaits me here? I dread to look into this paper. Almost my entire faith in the human family is destroyed."

"To CHARLES CONRAD MURRAY:

"My Dear Son: I am called; I have received that summons which none, however imperious and self-sustaining, can slight. I hear it, and feel it, and know it. It is proclaimed to me in the roaring of my ears. I feel it in my failing sight. It is blended with my heavy and difficult breathing; in this shuddering sense of dread; this fearful looking forward to, and waiting for, I do not know what.

"I hear a hollow, tomb-like voice, which says continually, 'Woman, thy soul is required of thee!' Oh, how it sounds! How dolefully it rings! Will you forgive your mother, Conrad? Can you pardon her now, as she stands shivering and shrinking on the confines of two worlds—neither wishing to go nor stay, not being fit for either; or will your curse, when you have heard all, descend with her to the grave, and herald her soul to the abodes of darkness. Alas! I know this would be but justice. Yet before I die, I wish if time serves to do an act, one solitary act in a whole life-time, which was not prompted

by self: self-love, self-interest, self-aggrandizement, and worse than all, revenge.

" My son, she whom you have loved so fondly, so unselfishly, and with a constancy which has defied absence, mystery, calumny, and time, which is the best crucible to test the worth of every passion, still lives, and is worthy of such devotion, and may yet be your wife, without sin or shame to either of you. Poor girl! she has suffered equally with yourself. Each throb of anguish which her seeming rejection has caused you; each pang of disappointment and mortification, has been more than responded to by her heart, which has known no change.

" That soul-harrowing tale of your close consanguinity, which was breathed into the ear of the poor girl the day after she was torn from your arms by her hard-hearted father, was a fiendish invention of Doctor Glencoe and your wretched mother to separate you — so often had we been foiled in our attempts to do this, and so well were we convinced that prison walls, nor dungeons, nor chains, would keep you asunder, if *she were willing*. So that embodiment of deceit pretended, with many protestations of sorrow, a great showing of shame, and almost maddening compunctions, to reveal to his child the secret cause of his opposition. Many were the crocodile tears shed over that poor thing, while we were fabricating that intricate chain of events which was forever to fetter her conscience.

" Conrad, that girl's mother was pure, and chaste, and honest, and upright; and as such she reared her daughter. She was my successful rival, and for that I hated her. Yes, from the hour I felt her superiority, I hated her. Even now, when time has receded to a mere point, and eternity is opening before me with its overwhelming vastness, I am still conscious of the existence of this passion. I also feel that it will constitute my greatest punishment down in that place to which I am hastening.

"But my mind wanders. Suffice it to say, that John Glencoe, whom I loved, even with that sort of passion which has descended to my son; devastating, and strewing my pathway, even as his, with the ruins of all cherished and beloved objects; gave the preference to the soft, gentle Myra. He gave her his hand and his name. Aye! his name; but I guided, ruled, and possessed the *man*, while the innocent and child-like Myra embraced and loved the soulless husband. Thus matters had progressed. But let me retrovert for a moment.

"I waited but one week after the alliance of my lover with my hated rival, and I too married. In a fit of unprecedented recklessness, I married your father, who was, as you know, first cousin to Marianna's mother. Conrad, on your father's part, I presume this was a match of affection, but I never reciprocated it. I honored his talents and force of character; I admired him as the finest specimen of manly beauty. O my son! he was your prototype. My judgment and my secret soul acknowledged his vast superiority over my former lover; but what matters? When was human love the growth of human will?

"You were born under just such circumstances, and you are like him. Oh! so like him in all things. This alone should contradict that evil story of ours. For seven years, their home was unblessed by the well-spring of gladness. No little toddling feet ran to meet him when he came. No soft, lisping voice hailed him by that sweetest of names, papa. He grew moody, morose, and his home seemed distasteful to him. Then it was that he threw himself in my way, importuned, entreated, vowed, in the name of all good as well as all evil spirits, that he had never loved Myra, but had continued to love me. I do believe that opposition and resistance had brought him nearer to the genuine feeling than any he had ever known before. But I never yielded; not so much, I fear, from

the love of virtue, as a desire to punish him. Ye Gods! what a feast it was to me to witness his writhings; after having lured him on to hope, and tempted him beyond the strength of any human being to resist, then would I repulse him, and gloat over the sufferings of a man prostrated by his passions.

“ Yet I repeat, I never sinned with that man, and I loved him too. You were born, my son, after your father’s decease, but not as John Glencoe stated, a whole year.

“ On returning from the little inn where they overtook you, he poisoned her pure ears with the recital of his own depravity and my weakness. The turpitude would have been greater on his part than on mine, as I was free then from the fetters of wedlock. He stated to that poor girl that you were both his children; then frightened her into the most solemn adjurations that can be uttered, as she knelt there, the Bible clasped to her breast, the priest standing before her with the crucifix held over her head, to absolve or denounce, as the case might be. (Glencoe was a Papist.) The oath was thus administered, the girl repeating it after the priest. Oh! I have not time now to recount the horrors of that scene; but they made the poor creature swear that she would suffer all the tortures of the damned rather than meet you again; or if she should see you by chance, that she would hide away. I witnessed all this from an aperture in a neighboring wall; and if I had had a human heart in my breast, I would have rushed forward and given the lie to that foul wrong to her and aspersion on myself. But I was riveted to the spot. Her father had forced her to confess her sins to a priest, yet she was a Protestant, like her mother. When she had gotten through with this dreadful ordeal, he pronounced the sentence, and said she had committed an unpardonable sin. Then the poor creature fell like one pierced to the heart, a lifeless mass.

"She never saw her husband after you were separated, Conrad; yet that little boy was born.

"And now, in conclusion, my poor son—my good, dutiful, affectionate boy, seeing no further barrier to your union with your second cousin, Marianna Glencoe, let me caution you against your children falling into that sin which you did not commit. Your child, the little Genevieve, and that beautiful boy are half-brother and sister. O Conrad! O my son! I am done. There is much more that I would say to you, if I had strength, but I have not. Farewell! may a God of pity prosper you and show mercy to me. Amen."

About the time that Murray finished reading this letter, he was summoned to the parlor to see a visitor, and there he found the same mysterious figure as ever, closely veiled. When she offered the salutations of the morning, he started, for he had not forgotten, or recovered from the influence of that soft, touching voice.

After he had led her to a seat—still retaining her hand—she says: "Friend, I have come to thee, I fear, on a thankless office. I have told the beautiful lady of thee; spoken to her of thy gallant conduct, thy noble disregard of thy own life, to save hers. I told her of thy superhuman strength and courage, expended in her service. I have plead for thee, explained to her eager ears how thou dost love her. I have pledged my life, and the honor of him who is dearer to me than that life, on the proof of thy fidelity and honesty; yet she shakes her head, and says, "I dare not, I must not. I shall perjure myself. Oh! if you but knew!" When I then plead for an interview, even though that should lead to a final separation, she weeps vehemently, and says, "I dare not even look upon him one time. O that I could gaze on his noble countenance one instant, and then close these eyes in death!" She also mourns for her child, grandmother, and her friend Minny.

"I have come to arrange a meeting with some of you. Though you, my dear friend," said she, turning to Conrad, and taking both of his hands, "she will not consent to see; she has not told me wherefore. I can not restore her to thee here, just yet. It would be as much as my own life, and that of another, is worth, to remove her until the time arrives. That may come sooner than we know of at present. To my power of doing good, there is a limit, and I am obliged to proceed with caution. She has offered two or three times to make me acquainted with the events and vicissitudes of her life, but I have always declined it. I did not wish to see her excited, while so feeble. Ah! little does she suspect how much I have been forced to know of her sad history. But this secret which keeps you asunder, I do not know. Yet I hope, sir, that it is not irremediable."

"No, dear lady," said Murray; "I have that here," holding out his mother's letter, "which will restore the right."

"I am rejoiced to hear it," said she, "for, with me, 'right makes might.' My intention is to come in a carriage to-night, and conduct thee to her; Murdoch will be with me. But remember, sir, when I introduce thee within the secret walls of my people—conduct thee into their stronghold, that I place my own life, and the safety of others, who are dear to me, at thy mercy, and maybe jeopardize the interest of five hundred Jews. And my father, thou would'st not wreak thy indignation and wrath on that old man? Thou would'st not harm him? Surely his daughter, who has ever stood between thee and danger, and tried to protect those thou lovest, may hope for clemency at thy hands, toward the feeble, white-haired, old man. His power is gone; he can work no more mischief at *her* behest. His will and strength to do so, seemed to depart with her life."

"Nay, lady, you surely do not distrust me? I would

be drawn by wild horses, or hung up like a malefactor, ere I would endanger aught that *you* love and value."

She passed into Minny's room, and held a long and confidential conversation, with that good little creature. Whether they had ever met before, or whether they had been made acquainted only through the 'Night Watch,' these chronicles do not state. But there seemed to be a perfect harmony and concert in their movements. She took the little Myra from Clarence, fondled her affectionately for a short time; then, placing her again in his arms, stooped down and kissed the boy.

"Sweet cherub! I will come to-night, and take thee to thy mother. She is quite well, my love, and waiting for thee; but thou must be patient, like a darling little boy, till I come." She then left.

"Aweel, aweel, I wonder what a' this means. See here, Col. Murray, I dinna ken what has come o'er the world." And she carried the children to Murray. "See what the fairy queen has left."

There was a necklace of diamonds of great value around the little girl's neck, and on Clarence's finger a costly gem, and in his bosom a diamond pin. Murray had been so much engrossed with his reflections, and his joy was so full to find the ban removed from them, that he had not thought of the boy. In thinking so intensely of the mother, he had forgotten the child. Now the idea comes rushing into his mind. He catches him up, clasps him to his breast, and calls out in joyful recollections,

"My dear Mrs. Brown, did I read aright? Can the instincts of the heart deceive me? It is so! Did I read aright?"

"Yes; but hist, hist! Speak not o' that to him. Myra wad na have him to speer into the past, I wot."

"You are right, my dear friend; and you are always wise, discreet, and considerate."

We must now take rather a retrograde stride.

CHAPTER XLIV.

RETRIBUTION: OR THE MANIAC HUSBAND.

"THERE is your husband — like a mildewed ear,
Blasting your wholesome presence."

"His wretched brain gave way,
And he became a wreck at random driven,
Without one glimpse of reason or of heaven."

WHEN John Glencoe arrived at the boarding-house, on his way to claim his wife and child, he found Walter walking the hall in great agitation. He had preceded the besotted and bestial husband, that he might lend assistance, if necessary, to the unfortunate wife. When he heard from Doctor Goodwin that they were not to be found, and that Marianna had escaped in the night from the terrible fate which awaited her on the morrow, he was more astonished than rejoiced. His first impulse was to pursue them; then he remembered that he had no right to do so, having no claims on them. So he had to sit down and "devour his heart" in secret, and endure as best he could the pangs of unrequited love.

But who can describe, what pen or pencil can paint the rage of the foiled husband? He had been impelled by the fiercest and worst passions incident to human nature, to seek his poor wife. Revenge and lust, these were the only motives which induced his return from Europe, and prompted that long and careful search, until lighting on some trifling circumstances, he traced her thither. His intention was to get possession of her person, and then remove to some distant country, where he could, unno-

ticed and unmolested, indulge the evil promptings of his now depraved heart. But God, who never slumbers or sleeps, but continues to watch over the humble and destitute, did not see fit to have that poor stray lamb of the fold further outraged.

Poor Glencoe was not radically bad, but he was impelled on by notions of wrongs, and infuriated by maddening drinks and evil associates to this cruel step. He had not for one second thought of the possibility of his poor, helpless, defenseless wife offering the least resistance to his will; much less, escaping from his power. Therefore, when he was informed of this fact, he raved and swore, gnashed his teeth, tore his hair, rushed from room to room, threw down furniture, broke whatever he laid his hands on, threw costly articles of ornament out of the windows, crushing other things to atoms in his hands.

At last, he came to a large mirror, where he saw his ghastly and distorted features reflected. He sent forth a hideous yell, and then burst into that most appalling of all sounds, a loud, wild, maniac laugh.

"Ha! ha! ha! You are grinning and gibbering at me, are you? You foul fiend! you Devil! You shall not rejoice at my discomfiture. You have come to claim me, maybe. Well, we'll see;" and he rushed on the splendid Venitian plate, and in a short time had demolished its polished face with his fist, aiming every blow at his own image, taking it for a mocking demon.

He was secured and carried, exhausted and bleeding, to the same cell which had for such a length of time imprisoned his hapless wife. This was accidental. The same strait-jacket that had been used to confine her tender limbs, was used to secure his distorted and mangled ones.

When Doctor Severe came, he found him a wild maniac, raging mad like a rabid dog, foaming at the mouth, and snapping at everything which came in his way. All possible means was used to restore him: for his ample fortune

secured to him every attention. All skill was exhausted, without producing any other change than a dogged silence. A month passed in this way; and they have pronounced him a hopeless case of idiotic insanity.

Thus the interval had elapsed. Poor Marianna had never been advised of the events above recorded; or of the present existing facts.

Minny has just reminded Col. Murray, that she feared Myra would make this a barrier to their union, even after she finds the first is removed. She proposes, therefore, that he shall write at once to Dr. Goodwin, and ascertain the present condition of the patient.

"Invaluable woman," exclaimed he, "you forget nothing. This is all-important. I will send a dispatch, which will be answered ere we meet." He then sat down to write. The door-bell rings; and the servant shows in Miss Emma Calderwood, and a gentleman.

The girl introduces Doctor Jocelyn; and then catching up the little Clarence, is so occupied with him that she does not see the crimson flush on her lover's cheek.

Murray approached him, and taking his hand, said with emotion, "I thank God that I am permitted this happiness once more. My friend, I have sought you everywhere. I have written letter after letter, directing them to every city and town in the United States, without receiving a response."

"Why this is most strange! I have done the same, only I was informed of your whereabouts; and wrote advisedly. This is the whole groundwork of my dissatisfaction toward you, sir. I was, in truth, most deeply wounded by your seeming slights; and must needs feel indignant at those contempts put upon me. But recently, within a day or two (said he, glancing at Emma), I have cultivated better feelings."

"Explain, sir, if you please. I am most anxious to have an eclaireissement at once, that I may free myself from this blame. Proceed, my friend. I am impatient."

"A year or two ago, meeting with a disappointment where all my hopes of happiness had been garnered up, and by which they were wrecked, I became so despairingly wretched, that I suffered my business to fall into frightful disorder. You know, perhaps, that I am an orphan, poor, and without patronage. After my only friend and benefactor died, I was dependent on the profession, which I had acquired through his charity. Poor Doctor Glencoe: *I* have cause to speak kindly of him, at least. Well: I neglected this only means left me of independence, and locked myself up in my chamber, holding no communication with any. I thus became involved; indebted to the landlord, without hope of finding the means to appease his rapacity. I wrote to you, sir, begging the loan of a small sum."

"For the love of God, say no more; or say at once that you exonerate me from this meanness. Tell me that you are convinced that I never received those letters. My dear Walter, I would have given you my coat, and gone without it myself. I am ready now, as before, to divide the last dollar with you."

"I do believe you, sir; and may He whom you invoke, forgive me, as I trust you will, for suffering those doubts to take hold of me at all."

"Go on," added Murray; "I see you have more to communicate."

"I was driven by my necessities to seek a subordinate situation in a lunatic asylum, which place to one of my temperament was maddening. My God! the horrors that I have been forced to witness in that pandemonium are enough to drive the strongest into the place for life. But let me hasten. It was my duty, by my particular request, to wait professionally on poor Mr. Glencoe, that I might

minister to his few wants ; which I did to the last, faithfully ameliorating his condition, and mitigating as much as I dared the stern usages of the institution. He is dead ! (It was by a mighty effort that Conrad suppressed an exclamation. But he did suppress it, for he saw that he was watched.) "Mr. Glencoe died about two weeks since," continued Dr. Jocelyn. "Before his death, he had his will drawn up and attested by the 'Board of Physicians,' who assert on oath that his last hours were sane. His immense estate he bequeathed jointly to the little Clarence and myself. I am here now, sir, to yield up my portion to the rightful heirs — his wife and his great aunt, Marianna's grandmother."

"Noble, generous young man ! How exalted is your nature ! Suffer me to say, I admire and honor you above measure. But I presume you have heard of the dreadful circumstances which wrap the fate of the unfortunate Marianna in mystery."

The young man turned away and walked to the window. After a while, he came up to Murray, and said, "Sir, you used the word mystery ; is it not a certainty ?"

"No : we have strong hopes that she lives."

"Indeed ! Then why stand ye here ? How can you for one moment thus fold your arms in peace ? Away at once to the rescue, else I —

He was interrupted in these vehement ejaculations and implied reproaches, by the entrance of old Mrs. Glencoe. Walter approached her, and after the mournful greetings were over, they withdrew to another room, where they conversed for a long time.

In the interim, Murray had learned from Emma that Walter was now her declared lover.

"And I hope accepted one ?" rejoined Minny.

"Not quite," said the innocent girl, blushing. Walter comes at the moment, and they depart.

"Now, my gude friend, ye canna longer doubt. Ye

must feel that the hand o' the Lord is in a' this! Dinna ye see how the way is being opened for ye? Now, will ye still distrust God?"

"I shall never forget to trace all good under Him to you, our patron saint," said Murray, with emotion.

"Aweel now! Dinna say sic thing as that. Not unto puir me, but unto that veiled lady. Render tribute only where it is due. I canna claim onything for simply doing my duty, when God mak's the way sae plain."

The hours roll on heavily. Suspense is at the front of the car, and anxiety clogs its wheels. They are waiting for the appearance of the veiled lady with feverish impatience.

Eight o'clock: nine—ten, and she does not come. They are almost in despair. At last a carriage is driven furiously up to the door. They have taken their seats in it. A soft, sweet voice says:

"I hope thou wilt forgive me. We have been detained by the sudden illness of my father."

"I trust he is better now?" said Murray.

"Yes, my friend, else I could not be here at this moment."

They sped on. On, on roll those everlasting wheels. "Will we never arrive?" thought Minny.

"Oh! when shall I behold her?" felt Murray.

After a while they stop. It is very dark. The young girl takes Murray by the hand; and Murdoch, with the child in one arm, has Minny on the other. They plunge into that dark alley, and now they ascend that interminable stair-way. On reaching the last platform, they hear the tinkling of the little bell. The girl listens for the quavering voice. She steps back; the bell rings again. She gives the rap, but there is no answering call. She throws a frightened look into Murdoch's face, who opens the door softly, and they enter the same miserable place which has been described before—with this difference,

there is a small cot or lounge in the center of the room, which is in very marked contrast with all surrounding objects. The bed and its furniture is of spotless whiteness, and of very fine material.

The girl goes up to the couch, and folding down the counterpane, finds it empty. She casts a bewildered look around. Then fixing her eyes on Murdoch, with the same alarmed look of inquiry, exclaims, "Father Abraham! what does this mean? Oh! my dear Murdoch, where is he? Who has stolen him from me?"

The slightest smile passed over the handsome face of the Night Watch, as he said, "Fear not, child. Who, think ye, would wish to do that?"

There is a mean, poverty-stricken tallow candle stuck in a hole in the top of the rickety table, which sends forth from its long wick, a ghastly glare on all around. The tallow has melted, and run down on the side, forming itself into fantastic shapes, which the timid and superstitious call a "winding sheet." Murdoch seems not to be wholly free from this weakness; for an ejaculation of impatience escaped him, as he proceeded to remove it ere Leah should notice. Having lighted another, he goes to a corner near the fire-place, and holding the light down, its rays fall on the body of the miser, stretched across that old trunk; his arms spread out protectingly over it, and his cheek laid lovingly on the coarse, rough hair. His attitude is that of one wishing to caress or shield a beloved object.

The girl flies to him — having torn off her bonnet and veil — and falling on her knees, commenced the most plaintive lamentations.

Murdoch takes her up tenderly and says, "Leah, you are mistaken, child. He is not dead but sleeps. Get your elixir, while I remove him to the bed."

He found some difficulty in tearing him off; his fingers had clenched the iron bands with such tenacity, and

retained their hold with such spasmotic force, that it seemed as if the hands must needs be severed from the arm. By Murray's assistance, he succeeded in dislodging him; and then he roused up and began to sigh and moan most piteously.

"Oh! oh! They want my monish. They have come to take my monish." Then he would weep with the imbecility of childhood.

Leah brings him the draught. He clutches it and cries out, "It is too much. Thou dost waste things, Leah. Hagar would not treat her poor fadder so. Oh! oh! I sall be ruin. I—I"—

"Drink it, dear father, said the girl; this must last you all night."

"Den put out one of dem candle; I sall be ruin. O shild! I sall be ruin." And he falls asleep, still whimpering.

Leah rings a silver bell: a small woman, very richly dressed, with keen, sinister-looking black eyes, and black hair, cut short over her head, appears. Minny recognizes those features. They belong to the little African slave. But that pure white skin, and that perfectly developed bust, are those of a young lady of the Caucasian race.

"Hagar," said Leah, "remain here; on thy life, do not leave him one moment. I shall return anon."

She then lead the way, first removing a parcel of old clothes from the wall, which looked as if they had hung there for a century; then pressed on a board: a portion of the wall, rather less than a common door recedes, and they pass into a narrow passage or corridor. They traverse this pass-way for some distance; then, after descending a few moments, they emerge into a spacious hall, lighted by a handsome lamp from the ceiling. At the end of this hall, which is marble, are folding doors beautifully carved and polished. These doors open as if by magic, at

the approach of the mistress, and disclose a large saloon resplendent with chandeliers, suspended from the vaulted roof, whose innumerable lights are reflected on the face of large mirrors reaching to the floor. On either side of the room are arranged in charming negligence, gorgeous sofas, ottomans, divans, rocking chairs, etc. The carpet is so rich and soft, that their foot-fall seems to be on down; crimson satin, and the finest white muslin curtains, hang from the lofty window-frames. These only open into other spacious rooms; there seems to be no looking out on the external world.

At one end of this grand saloon, there is an aviary; where the birds imprisoned feel not their fetters—all is so beautiful and delicious there: they sing and chirp, and hop from flower to flower; and they know their mistress, and sing more cheerily, and carol more blithely. When she comes, they perch upon her hand, and peck the seeds and crumbs from her fingers, as she feeds them.

At the other end is a conservatory, where every native, and many exotics, are cultivated; the sun being admitted through a sky-light. There are also various musical instruments lying about the room. Our friends, notwithstanding their pre-occupation, are compelled to note the appointments of this room so unique as well as magnificent; so beautiful and dazzling.

“Now rest thee here, my friends, while I go in first,” said Leah. “Murdoch, remain thou with them.” And taking the child by the hand, she disappears.

In another instant, they hear a simultaneous cry of joy, from mother and child. After a short time, Minny is taken in. The good creature’s voice is heard first as if in explanation; then expostulation. Then she is interrupted by sobs and ejaculations, from poor Myra. Now, again, that honest, upright, and earnest voice, is heard in deprecatory tones. Anon she chides. But when those soft, sweet, plaintive tones are heard in entreaty: “For

the love of heaven, cease to tempt me, Minny," Murray can stand it no longer. He burst from the firm grasp of Murdoch; who had held him fast up to that moment, lest he should spoil all, by precipitating himself into her presence at the wrong time. He has cleared the distance between them, and Marianna, is once more resting on his bosom. All else is forgotten; many minutes of wild, delirious joy, and ecstatic rapture, pass by before they utter a word; then, when their imprisoned feelings are freed, and their long pent-up natures are permitted to meet and mingle; when soul answers to soul from the secret depth of their fond, loving hearts, then they find language to express it.

When Conrad had rushed into the room, and thrown himself down by the side of Marianna, Leah slipped away, and going back to Murdoch, sat down by him, and leaning her head wearily on his shoulder, shed tears, gentle tears, soft and refreshing as the evening dew. He encircled her in his arms, and pressed her to his bosom tenderly; Oh how tenderly and delicately! You could scarcely have believed that this was the same Night Watch. Yet it is even so. It is he, and the heart and the head are the same; the true and genuine nature is the same; he has only cast off the rough coating, the coarse rind.

"Dear one," said he, softly, in her ear, "the time has almost come. Our task is well-nigh done, and we have nearly reached the goal. Oh! how I do love you for your goodness."

"And I thee for thy greatness," sighed the girl.

They are now joined by Minny. She informs them that there is but one draw-back to an entire reconciliation. The letter — Conrad's letter; she can not be reconciled to that. It was a forgery; they believe this; still Marianna is sad and tearful.

"If that is all," said Leah, "I can soon make the present

bright again." She went to her room, and returned with two papers, and tapping at their door, passed in. She saw at a glance that there was a shadow on their brows. "Come, this must not be, friends. Dispel that cloud, and listen to me."

Then she recounts the events which transpired at the time of Miss Lindsay's visit to her father — hands the original letter which she picked up from the floor after the lady had left, saying very innocently, "I presume it belongs to thee, lady;" and turning to Conrad, says, "There was no envelop, but the name within is thine."

They are again left alone, and now this last barrier is removed. It is all explained, and they are more fully convinced than ever, that they had narrowly escaped being sacrificed to the diabolical plot meant to subserve the interests of the baser actors in the foregoing drama.

Minny goes in to admonish them of the hour. She must return to her family, and they are to accompany her. By dint of much talking, she at length gets them to understand that they are still inhabitants of this mundane sphere, and that *her* duties call her to her own peculiar little sphere.

They look round for their benefactress, that they may pour out their souls in gratitude, but she is not there. Murray takes up the child, twines his other arm about the waist of Marianna, and they move on through the same passages and hall. On arriving at the end of the last corridor, Murdoch listens a moment; then pressing his finger on the spring, the wall opens, and they pass through. Leah is there on her knees, by the side of the dying miser. They do not invade the privacy of her sorrow, which is holy, and should not be intermeddled with.

When Murdoch has seen them to the carriage, he returns to Leah. He entreats her to retire and leave him to watch. "Oh no, dear Murdoch, it is not long that any of

us will have to minister to him. Let me alone. I must speak a great deal between this and day."

The patient opens his eyes, and seeing Murdoch, with an impatient gesture waves him off.

"Go, dear Murdoch," said Leah, "he wishes to be left alone with me, that is all. Do not think hardly of me, my love, for sending you away." She rises from her knees, and laying one little white hand round his neck, with the other pushes back the raven locks from his lofty brow, and imprints a holy kiss on his forehead; then returned and knelt again by the poor old man. He rewards her with a look of unutterable love and confidence.

The whole night, that dutiful daughter and noble-minded woman is pleading for others. She entreats her father to make restitution, ere it is too late, to all whom his conscience accuses him of having wronged. She begs him to leave her sister Hagar equal heiress with herself in his will, which he is now most anxious to have drawn up. But when she proposes sending for a notary, he objects vehemently, saying that she only should write it. To pacify him, she consents. Then there on her knees, with streaming eyes, she implores him to consent to her marriage with Murdoch. He shakes his head, and makes an angry sign for silence.

"Ah! poor father, I can not obey thee in this. I must speak ere it is too late." The Jew shakes his head again.

"My dear father, he is the best friend thou ever hadst. It was only that he might in some sort watch over, warn, and shield thy family and our people from wrong and oppression, that he ever consented to become the Night Watch. Otherwise he would not have descended to such an office."

The old man seems to reflect; then shaking his head, closes his eyes. Leah proposes to send for a Rabbi; but he objects to this also, and says, peevishly, "Shild, shild, I

does not want any of dem ; dou is enough for me, and can do all dat I wants done."

Day dawns, and finds that daughter still on her knees, holding the hand of her death-stricken father. Presently she withdraws to prepare him some nutriment, but he yells after her as if frightened by ten thousand furies. Hagar, who has been all her life his tool and instrument of mischief, who was always one after his own heart, is now banished from his presence. He is apparently afraid of her.

Twelve o'clock ; and the patient is so much worse that the girl sends for the Rabbi without his consent. When he comes, he informs Leah that there is no time to lose ; and whatever there is to do, must be done quickly. He writes a few words, and gives the note to Hagar. Then that High Priest—that old Caiaphas—sits down by that crime-stained man, whose soul is weighed down by sin, and talks to him of his temporal affairs. Leah had left the room for a moment, and on her return brings with her this note to Murdoch :

" DEAR MURDOCH — Come quickly, and bring with thee as witnesses, Col. Murray, Doctor Brown, and a notary. Lose no time ; in a little while it will be too late.

Thine own LEAH."

She ran down to the store, and calling the shop-boy, gave him the note and a piece of money, urging him to delay not a second. Fortunately he found Murdoch on his way there. He jumped into a hack, and drove to the different points ; and having gathered up the persons named, in a short time they are at the place.

Leah is still on her knees by the bedside. She raised her head, and by signs intimated that they must keep out of sight. They therefore ranged themselves at the back of the patient. There are five or six strange-looking swarthy Jew faces sitting opposite, all the while eyeing them with looks of distrust and curiosity.

The Rabbi goes to him, and inquires if he wishes to have his will executed. Then each one of the Jews proposes, in turn, to perform this service. The miser refuses, and points to Leah.

She gets up at once, and taking a Portfolio from the shelf, says, "Dear father, thy child is ready to write." The Jews draw closely around her, as if afraid of treachery even at the hour of death. The old man, greatly to the amazement of all, raises himself without assistance, and sitting up in bed, with a strong and clear voice, speaking slowly, and with great distinctness, begins; while Leah writes out his jargon in plain English.

"I, Levi Nathan, do will and bequeath to the people living in this house, fifty thousand dollars, to be divided among them. I leave to my daughter Hagar the sum of fifty thousand dollars, and *will* her, with this money, to my clerk, Moses Isaacs. If they do not marry, it is forfeited, and reverts to my daughter Leah. I bequeath to the man Murdoch my thanks for his services to my family. I leave to Charles Conrad Murray, one hundred thousand dollars, by way of restitution for injuries sustained by him at my hands. I bequeath to my dear affectionate daughter Leah, for her faithful care of me; and because now, as I am about to yield up the ghost, I feel that every act and motive of her life has been just and upright; I bequeath to her two hundred thousand dollars, and my consent for her to marry whomsoever she pleases I also will to her this house, with all its stories and compartments, including store rooms, offices, cells, prisons, etc.; and lastly, all property that shall remain after the disbursing of the aforementioned sums."

He reaches out, takes the paper and pen, and with a steady hand affixes his signature. Then fell back on his pillow, and closed his eyes. The will was attested,

and sealed. Then the Jews drop off, looking sullen and dissatisfied.

Poor old Mordecai Faggot never speaks but once again. He raises his head, and peers curiously around the room; then fixing his eyes on the two candles burning, cries out, "Oh! oh! I sall be ruin! I sall be ruin. Put out one of dem candle. Oh! oh! I sall be ruin;" and with this effort of expiring nature, he breathed his last in the arms of his daughter. Truly, "the ruling passion is strong in death."

Murdoch knew too well the disposition of the miserable horde hid about in the Jews' Quarter, to leave the place unguarded. He sets a strong watch in that room, and men were also stationed about the premises. The funeral takes place in a large, gloomy old room, just below the miser's den. This apartment had always been used as the secret council chamber.

It is over; and the dutiful daughter has witnessed the last rites, and paid the last tribute of respect to his memory.

The question now arises, where is all this money to be found? Mr. Nathan never made any deposits. He had during the last year gathered in his funds with heavy usury. Since which time, he had refused to give out any more loans. No one has any knowledge of his business. He never had a friend or confidant. Then where is this money? None can answer; at least no one does. Conjecture and speculation have both been exhausted. At last it settles down into the conviction that the poor old creature had carried out his mischievous and malicious principles of fraud and treachery even in death—this being his final and grand hoax.

CHAPTER XLV.

“THE HAPPY FAMILY.”

HOPE with a goodly prospect feeds the eye,
Shows from a rising ground possession nigh.”

“What deemed they now of the future or the past?
The present, like a tyrant, held them fast.”

FOUR months have elapsed since the exciting events recorded in the last chapter. We hear nothing more from the Jews' Quarter. Dr. Walter Jocelyn and Emma have called to see Marianna. It is well for the latter that she is innocent and self-satisfied, as well as absorbed in her own prospect of happiness. That crimson spot on the young man's cheek; that agitated hand and tremulous voice, reveal a tale of only smothered affection.

He again insists on waiving his claims as a legatee to the estate of John Glencoe. But Marianna as firmly declines, when Minny and Dr. Brown expostulated with her on this obduracy. Seeing that it is a source of grief to Walter, she shakes her head and says: “I could not eat the bread purchased with that man's money. No! rather let me return to the hovel and be pinched, and almost starved, as I was then, than forced to rear my child on his means.”

Dr. Brown has been persuaded to take possession of Col. Murray's splendid mansion. So they all live there together in perfect peace. They are spoken of by all who visit them as the “happy family.” It is generally believed that Marianna has inherited an immense fortune. Her bright, beautiful, and cheerful face bears them out in this

conclusion. She dresses in tasteful, handsome style; richly, but still with chaste simplicity.

The improved manner of living, and the general appearance of the good little Dr. Brown and family, induces the verdict among the clever ones, that he also, by some fortuitous circumstance, has gotten possession of that oil which makes the ear of worldly popularity move on so *nicely*. It is not true. The Doctor attends to his professional duties as unremittingly, and his collecting, as closely as ever. Yet he is more charitable. He can now afford this luxury of the heart.

Minny, in that great palace of a house, with all the appointments and surroundings of Southern ease and magnificence, is the same single-minded, honest-hearted, cheerful-tempered little woman, that she was while waiting on a customer behind the little counter of the little toy-shop. She is truly the light, the life, and the joy of all beholders. Now, Mrs. Calderwood and the other parasitical hangers-on, flock to see her. She receives them with an easy graciousness which is marvelous. She is not elated. She feels no pride or exultation about any of those things which the world can give or take away. Her peace is built on a firmer foundation — yea, fixed on the “rock of ages.”

Marianna would be the nucleus in the gay, fashionable world in the capital of ——, did she consent to accept the homage of these *summer* friends. She is exceedingly beautiful, refined, elegant, and accomplished. But she turns coldly from all demonstrations of the kind to her little home circle, and giving her hand to Murray, while she encircles her child and grandmother in a tender embrace, looks round on the “Happy Family,” and says:

“This is my *world*. Nay, I fear it is more; surely it is heaven on earth! God forgive me, if I sin in forgetting that there has ever been sorrow and suffering among us!

There is now but one draw-back. Happy are they who have not many."

The little Clarence—gladly would his friends withdraw him from the theater. But Mr. Gooch was the "good Samaritan," in those fearful times; and he has, by his generous, gentlemanly conduct, taken such deep hold on the hearts of the family, especially the child, that it seems impossible to separate themselves from him. The dear, grateful, affectionate boy, weeps and pines for the presence of his friend. Seeing that he is truly enamored of the profession, they are at length induced to give him up to his benefactor. His friends are pained by this; yet they, like all others, must yield at last to the force of circumstances. They console themselves by thinking that it may be, after all, the boy's true vocation.

Marianna and Murray are both in deep mourning; at the end of this season, they are to be married. Then they purpose—the "happy family"—to form a party and make a visit to Minny's native city of Edinburg. Walter and Emma, sweet Mary Green and her chosen one, and a few other friends, will be of the number. At the end of this mourning season, there will be a general jubilee. It is also the time that Mr. Gooch, with some of his cleverest members of the stage, have determined to make the tour of Europe. Thus Marianna may not be separated from her son.

Maj. Lindsay has not heard from his daughter since she left the American shore, nor has he written. The Governor and he are still as jolly boon-companions as ever. The little great man, was married soon after the elopement of his *lady love*—"the gorgeous Gertrude," as he continues to call her. The reader has already seen that the sudden disappearance of his favorite, made no break in the routine of his pursuits of pleasure or business.

To-day he and the major have called to pay their

respects to the ladies. To Minny's inquiring after his daughter, he answers gruffly, "I know little or nothing about them, madam—have not heard since they went abroad. Yet I feel no anxiety, or at all events, no uneasiness. She has fallen into good hands; and thank God! I believe she has, at last, met with a master-spirit. She was a perfect autocrat at home. I don't know how she will stand the curb bit though;" and he looked down thoughtfully while he added, almost sadly, "that Josiah Gaines is the very Deil in obstinacy, when he sets his head to it. Yet I should not mind that; I suppose the fellow always loved her, with all her faults; and is honorable withal. But, Governor," said he, trying to look up cheerfully, "Josiah knows what he's about in the counting-room (and he forced a little laugh), and me-thinks he knows how to count for himself sometimes. Eh? major."

GERTRUDE TO MINNY.

London, June 10th, 18—.

"*My Dear Madam*—May I take the liberty of addressing a few lines to a stranger? I am driven to it by my great anxiety to hear from home. Not one line have I received or one word heard, since the night I left. *Mrs.* Brown, I am very unhappy; and from what I heard of you before I left home, I know you possess a good heart and boundless sympathy for the wretched. Do not think this miserable state of things arises from disagreements with my husband. Not so, I assure you. I would not venture on such an experiment. I would not even hazard the expression of a difference of opinion on any subject of importance. And if I did, it would not avail me anything. He is so *clever*, so exceedingly *clever* and smart! Did you ever know my husband, madam? I do believe he is the smartest and cleverest man in the world.

"I am wretched, because Mr. Gaines thinks proper to

lead such a quiet, retired life. It does not suit me. You know I was so much sought at home, such a belle. I do not say this boastingly, but rather with regret, since it is now all forever broken up. Oh ! I did queen it over the beaux so delightfully. I feel assured that you are almost ready to weep over my troubles — you, who are so sympathetic. Do you not think it dreadful, that I am compelled to lead this humdrum life ?

“ Why, madam, would you believe it ? I am here the same ‘ *Gorgeous Gertrude*,’ in the midst of gay, dashing gallants—counts, viscounts, lords, and dukes—who all look as if they admired me. In fact, their eyes declare it every moment. Well, would you believe it ? that *he*, my husband — this clever one — has never left my side long enough to give them an opportunity to ratify with their tongues what their eyes so openly declare. Oh ! This is torture ! and I sometimes think I shall get to hate Gaines, if—if—I—I (it will out) was not *afraid* of him. Now, I have admitted to you what I would not to anybody else on the face of the earth. I would not have Josiah to know it for a million of dollars.

“ There is still another annoyance. I have a great many calls from some of the first gentlemen in the world. But, (could you believe that any man would be such a brute ?) I have never been allowed to receive one of them, without that everlasting fixture at my elbow. I am so outraged by this system of espionage, that I hate him, and feel like I could kill him and myself too. It would not have been thus, had I married Col. Murray, instead of my father’s clerk.

“ But you would never think, that this calm, dignified, self-possessed, self-sustained, and maybe sometimes a little bit self-sufficient American gentleman, and Maj. Lindsay’s second clerk, Josiah Gaines, were one and the same. You can not understand, I presume, how he could come to London and glide into such a position so easily, fresh from the counting house : where that everlasting appen-

dage, the pen over the ear, was the only adornment of the outside of that clever head — the only circumstance to break the eternal monotony of those smooth, precise, hateful, flaxen locks. Sometimes when those real noblemen are showing such deference to the opinions of this New World banker, I am almost tempted to tell them of it. But then, Mrs. Brown, there must always have been a great deal more in the inside of that head than any of us ever suspected ; else he could not have thus taken his place at once among the great folks. He seems really to be as much at home here, and as much at his ease, as my Lord W——, who by the by, I must tell you about.

"I have known for some time, by the expression of his fine black eyes (Oh, how I do admire black eyes and black locks now), that in his secret soul he was languishing for me ; but Josiah has never given him an opportunity to tell me so. Well, Ann, my same maid, is with me still. She is free, of course ; but no matter, Ann came into my room this morning, when the hateful old Josiah was tossing up the brat, the young Josiah. Did you know we had a child ? This was most unexpected, as well as unwelcome. I never premeditated such an outrage on my fine form, I assure you. And now, my dear Mrs. Brown, I can scarcely breathe while I write. I feel so much shame, rage, and mortification at the atrocity. Don't you think the wretch makes me nurse my own child ? Yes, makes it *suck* me. I believe that is what the plebeians call it. Then he will sit by and watch the process, and gloat over it as the *thing* draws draught after draught from my bosom ; which you know, of course, must inevitably be spoiled (and this was the joy and pride of my life). Ann says I am the subject of ridicule with all the abigails, who say such a thing is an unheard-of vulgarity in high life. He must know that I hate him, as he sits by toying with the child ; ever and anon placing its little old hand on my bare breast. Then I can't refrain from a shudder, and Josiah shouts

out in a great laugh and repeats it. But I must stand it all; I can make nothing by talking. Oh! if he would only quarrel with me, it would help me some. But whenever I quarrel with him, he stands quite still, folds his arms, and, when I have got through, smiles, that same dry, quiet, provoking, American sort of smile (I don't think they smile so in high life *abroad*), tips his hat to me and leaves, locking the door after him. That day and the next, and for as many days as I am wretched (he calls it sullen), my meals are sent up to me. Then I am not invited to attend the opera or any place of amusement, until I am forced by sheer weariness to kiss him, and ask his pardon. All this I must do voluntarily; he would not make the least advance toward a reconciliation to save my life. Now, madam, what do you think I get in return for this wondrous condescension? Nothing, but one of those aforesaid smiles and a cool kiss on the forehead. Then our lives fall into the same course as before; which is so smooth and *tame*, because of its perpetual smoothness.

"Saints and angels! I had quite forgotten what I had set out to say. Ann came into my dressing room as I said. Josiah was there. I suppose he could read in her face that she had some secret for me. (Oh! it is a great misfortune for a woman to have too clever a husband.)

"He walked right up to her and said, 'Ann, there is a vessel to leave to-morrow for the port of New Orleans. Do you wish to return to the United States?'

"'Lawsy me! No, Mas'r Josiah; I don't want to leave Mis Gutty.'

"'Then give me that letter, and don't open your mouth, or you go on board in ten minutes.'

"I believe she was about to obey my look and deny it, but he fixed his eye on her, and she handed him a letter without saying a word. It was a beautiful pink, embossed, perfumed envelop. He read it all through, without the

least emotion, then quietly lighted a taper, and held the letter over it. But seeming suddenly to recollect himself, he put it into his pocket. I could have seen *him* consumed, and felt, myself, as if I should ignite.

"He looked at me, and smiled as placidly as ever; then walking up to me, folded his arms, and said: 'Now, don't get excited over it, Gertrude. I am convinced, from under the man's own hand, that you have not invited this insult by word or deed; but in future I shall require you to guard your eyes.'

"He then turned to the nurse who held the child, took the babe in his arms, embraced him very tenderly, touched his hat to me, and left the room, calling Ann after him. In fifteen minutes more she was on board of that vessel. I never saw her again. A new maid was immediately installed in her place.

"That afternoon, as I sat moodily alone, watching the big drops as they pattered on the window, and mingling my tears with the rain (in imagination), I heard a confused noise of many voices and trampling of feet. Then the door flew open, and my wounded husband was brought in on a litter, in a fainting condition. He had challenged Lord W—, just for writing *me* a letter. I do not think Col. Murray would have cared if I had gotten one every day. After all, I believe it is the easiest and safest way to marry a man like him, who would not love his wife enough to make him care what she *said*, or what she might be tempted to *do*.

"The ball has been extracted, and I think he will get well. I believe I hope he may. My dear Mrs. Brown, strange as it may seem to you, although Josiah keeps me so in a strait-jacket all the time, I can't help but respect him greatly; and sometimes I almost admire him. I rather think I quite do, since he has been laying here so patient and resigned under his sufferings. He has never once upbraided me, or even by innuendo, alluded to the

past. So sometimes, in spite of my resolves, I find myself liking him. I fear I shall be weak enough to love him even, if he don't quit showing off such sublime traits of character; in a small way, you know. I don't wish you to think, Mrs. Brown, that he has become a hero to me, because he maimed my noble lover for life, and got shot himself. Many a coward has done as much. But the marvel is, how can he lie here, day after day, without repining — scarce so much as groaning — and never once accusing, or quarreling with me. You must admit, madam, that this is very touching. I could almost weep when I look at him.

"Do write to me. I should very much like to be informed of a few things. Poor Gov — ! How did he stand my treatment of him? I felt more regret at deceiving him than aught else. My father ever loved his wine, quite as well as he did his daughter. I knew this, and it drove me to many a reckless act. *His* indifference, Mrs. Murray's counsel, and my own vanity, made me what I was and am. How long after that *premeditated* alarm of fire, was it before my *soi disant* lover, Col. Charles Conrad Murray, turned up again? Apropos, what has become of that pretty milliner, way down on Market street? The brat, young Josiah, is squalling; and the man, old Josiah, is groaning; so I must bid you adieu. Of course you will not delay your response.

'GERTRUDE GAINES.'

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE JEWESS.

"Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,
Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies."

"Her overpowering presence made you feel,
It would not be idolatry to kneel."

TWELVE months more have glided by, nothing of consequence occurring in the happy family to mar its harmony. The joint preparations for the marriage and voyage, are progressing easily and smoothly. This perfect holiday of the feelings, has been enjoyed to its full extent. Marianna is growing more and more beautiful every day. Murray is almost sublime in his peculiar style of fine looks. Minny, her dear Gabe, and the little Myra, are happy; then, of course, pretty, in their several different ways. They have planned that Lucy May and little Jenny Brown shall give up the toy shop, and become inmates of the mansion, in order to watch over and afford companionship to the two old ladies. Old Mrs. Glencoe is still hale, cheerful, and happy; but the old grandam, Mrs. Dun, is very fragile.

A few days preceding the wedding of our friends, the following note is received:

"COL. MURRAY—DEAR SIR:—I am ordered by one in authority, to invite you and all your household, to an entertainment at her residence to-morrow evening. But first, there is business to transact. Come at eight o'clock to the store of Nathan & Co., in the Jews' Quarter. I will meet you there, and conduct you to the presence

of the hostess. Fail not to come. It is of vital importance to many. I am directed to say, that every member of your domestic circle is invited.

Yours very respectfully, JOHN MURDOCH."

This note excited much interest, and not a little speculation, with some commotion, in that quiet, peaceful, household.

"Why, how is this, wife?" says the little Doctor, "Murdoch come to life again? It is now a year since we have seen or heard of him. During that long interval, the rich, sonorous voice of the Night Watch, proclaiming that great lie, 'All's well,' has not been heard. Has he, think you, been 'Sunning his heart in beauty's eyes,' after his cold sojourn in the shades of night?"

At the appointed time, they were *en route* to that same old gloomy court. Murdoch was in waiting, and led them not up that mysterious spiral stair-way, from the blind alley, but a new, broad, modern stair-case, to that marble paved hall; thence to the magnificent saloon. They are invited by him to sit, while he excuses himself, and leaves the room.

In a few moments, Leah comes out, leaning on his arm, dressed in deep mourning. She embraces Marianna and Minny affectionately, shakes hands with the gentlemen cordially; nay, turns her cheek to Murray to kiss. Few words are passed in idle conversation, and conventional compliment. There is a deep shadow resting on the face of the beautiful girl.

"My friends," said she, "you all knew my father, and he was odious to you for many things; but he was my parent, and since the death of my mother, I have had the care of him. Low and groveling as old Faggot, the Jew peddler and miser, must have appeared to you; yet in his better existence, and under his true name, Levi Nathan, he was sometimes susceptible of generous impulses, and did per-

form good actions. But alas ! you see how it is, the crimes and misdeeds of the miscreant Faggot are heralded abroad, and registered in your hearts, while the benefactions of the clothing merchant, Levi Nathan, go unrecorded. It is the way of the Christian world ; I do not blame you."

There was an inexpressibly touching pathos in her voice and manner, and a ravishing grandeur in her beauty, while she discanted so feelingly on the characteristics of her parent. She had ceased speaking, being overcome by her emotions ; and now, as she resumed the subject, she raised those large, lustrous eyes, and they are suffused with gentle tears.

"I have called you together this evening, my friends, with a two-fold purpose—to witness two rites," and she blushed again. "First, by the aid of my early friend here," laying her hand on Murdoch's arm, "I shall endeavor to carry out the wishes, and obey the last injunctions of my poor father, as well as to comply with his written will. It was his wish, his dying request, that one whole year should elapse before there should be any steps taken to bring to light the treasures so long and so wearily hoarded together, and secreted somewhere, no one knew how or in what place. I alone was advised of the mysterious hiding-place."

She now led the way to the room so often described in these papers, and taking from her bosom a silver whistle, drew from it a shrill note, which was immediately answered by the young Jew, Isaacs, and a rather pretty girl, with remarkably smooth, fair skin, and short, black hair. When she met the gaze of Marianna, she colored, and the same sinister, vindictive expression gleamed from her eyes and revealed the secret.

Marianna was so much surprised, that she was about to utter an exclamation, when Leah glided by, and looking significantly into her face, whispered, "Not a word, lady ;

on thy life, do not speak. Ignorance is worth more than wisdom within these walls. Be warned."

Again she sounds the whistle, and four grave, genteel-looking Jews enter. A large table is placed in the center of the floor. They surround it. Leah talks to them for a moment in their own tongue, and they take their seats on opposite sides of the table, each being furnished with a small blue glass bowl of water. Then that large, old, iron-bound trunk is dragged forth from beneath that heap of rubbish, which looks as if it had been accumulating from the first moment of time.

Leah again gives the sign, and those iron bands are wrenched off by that Vulcan hand. The padlock is removed at a blow. Aye! our friend, the Night Watch, does not lack strength of hand or head when occasion calls. All now is intense expectation and curiosity. Leah kneels, the more for convenience. She essays to open the trunk, but is overcome by her feelings, and is obliged to turn away and once more pay the tribute of grief and shame to the memory of the father and the miser.

The lid is raised; but who can describe the blank disappointment which ensues? There seems to be only a few old clothes, pantaloons, vests, coats, etc., all very carefully folded. The girl takes them out, and lays them, with a feeling of awe and reverence, on the floor. Now there is nothing left but the empty tray.

She touches a secret spring, and one compartment flies open. And then there is a simultaneous exclamation of wonder. Piles of gold — pieces of every size, from the one dollar to the fifty — meet their eyes. Murdoch and the young Isaacs hand it to the men at the table, who on their part fall to counting, without a word being spoken. When the gold is all taken out, and its value duly estimated and recorded, she touches another spring, and a second partition opens, which is filled with bank notes and title deeds. They go on with the same process; the table

is piled up. Again and again, hidden recesses are opened by Leah, and their treasures dislodged. Then those old clothes are made to yield up their secrets. Every pocket, and facing, and hem is rife with the precious metal, or no less precious paper. This was also handed over to the men at the table.

Leah then goes to that mass of disgusting rubbish, and points out another chest, which Murdoch drags to the light; and the same operation of counting and registering is gone through with. There are also old vessels of household use filled with small coin, the common currency of the day. Yet this poor old wretch had denied himself a sufficient quantity of the proper sustenance of life. Reader, you have seen him in his various characters. I can not stop for commentaries; though I know they should be made, "to point a moral, as well as adorn a tale." But all this has been done by higher and abler predecessors. I therefore forbear to draw this draft on your patience, but rather check on your imagination.

Now this immense estate is duly disposed of to the several legatees. All arrangements, both for convenience and security, had been made by the provident Leah and the shrewd, practical Murdoch.

It is finished; the last will and testament of Faggot the miser, and Nathan the Jew, has been executed. The guests are invited back to the saloon, and while their feelings seek repose after those exciting scenes, they recline on luxurious sofas, lounges, etc. They are lulled by the plaintive notes of the night bird, and soothed by the refreshing murmur of falling waters from the alabaster fountains. All within those orientally gorgeous rooms is strange, wild, and beautiful. Sweet music floats on the perfumed air, steals over the senses, tranquilizing and entrancing. Now it is nearer, and losing its vagueness, breathes a low and mournful strain.

"Oh ! that strain again ; it had a dying fall :
 And came o'er my ear like the sweet south
 That breathes upon a bank of violets,
 Stealing and giving odor."

It is a lament, a requiem. Now it swells louder and louder, until it burst on the rapt ear in a full chord. Presently this breaks into a rich chorus of human voices. One full, clear, but melodious voice leads ; while the concert of singers bring in the refrain. The following simple but touching lines are improvised by Leah :

" My task is o'er ; I've done my best
 To carry out thy known behest :
 The wish to make some small amend
 For sorrows which thy acts did send.

CHORUS : But lie in peace, and take thy rest,
 Until thou wak'st on Abra'am's breast.

" The world despised thee, O my sire,
 Would have thee cast into that fire —
 Where wicked, bad, and ruthless men
 Writhe, shriek, and curse ; but groan amen.

CHORUS : But lie in peace, etc.

" But we thy children, know that thou
 Wast not all bad ; and well we trow
 Of many a deed in secret done,
 Unseen by all but that great One.

CHORUS : But lie in peace, etc.

" Peace to thy shade, deluded one ;
 And in that grave where thou art gone,
 Mayst thou in quiet take thy rest,
 Until thou wak'st on Abra'am's breast.

CHORUS : But lie in peace, etc."

When the music ceased, then succeeded an interval of delicious repose. The senses are soothed, and the fancy is reveling in Elysian groves. "Surely," exclaimed Murray, "this is Paradise, and the place we have left is

Hades." They were aroused by the receding of the opposite wall, displaying the banquet-room. I shall not venture on a description of this magnificent fete.

A party dressed in festive robes of pure white, advanced. A lady, adorned simply in India muslin ; her long, black hair hanging in graceful ringlets to her waist, adorned by a wreath of natural orange blossoms. She wears no other ornaments, no gems. She is leaning on the arm of a dark, handsome, majestic, real "Cœur-de-Leon" looking man, who is also dressed with great simplicity, though in the finest black cloth. They advanced to the center of the room, and take their station under the gorgeous chandelier, which sends out its rays from an hundred wax candles.

Another couple follow; but they are in marked contrast to the first. These seem to have aimed to rival the nobles of the "Vale of Cashmere," in regal splendor of apparel. The girl, who is rather small and slight, is dressed in a robe of fine blond lace, wrought all over with silver and pearls. On her head she wears a tiara of diamond, a necklace to suit, pin, ear-rings, etc. Her fingers are literally weighed down with jewels. The gentleman is dressed in keeping. They come from another door, and like the first couple, take their place in the center.

From another sliding panel the Rabbi in his robes and high cap comes, followed by a large company of their own people, maids matrons, young men and old, youths and children, all having on the wedding garments. He raises his hand aloft, and that large assembly kneel. A prayer is pronounced, and as he opened the book, they rise to their feet, all save the two couples, who remain on their knees. The ceremony is performed according to the Jewish rites.

It is over, and the high priest holds out his hand for them to kiss. When the greetings are gotten through with among themselves, Leah and Murdoch approach our friends, who embrace her affectionately, and utter heart-

felt congratulations to both. The other pair keep aloof. Leah, now Mrs. Murdoch, whispers a few words to Murray; then he and his party advance, and are presented to Mr. and Mrs. Isaacs. After which, they are invited into the banquet. Then they adjourn to the saloon, and there converse with Leah and Murdoch about many things, embracing the present, past, and future. The other couple come not near, but mingle with their own people, and enjoy themselves in their own way, according to their peculiar usages.

The friends take an affectionate leave of Leah and Murdoch; after pressing them to make a visit, Minny and her dear Gabe, propose an early evening, or a day; but Murdoch refers them to his wife.

She shakes her head somewhat sadly. "Dear friend, we have many duties yet to perform; thou wilt excuse us." To the entreaty of Marianna and Murray, she replies, laying her soft little hand on his arm: "If the time should ever come, when I can do thee a service, then thou wilt not have to use persuasion, and shalt not find me backward. Till then I pray thee hold us excused."

So they are forced to leave without a promise of further communication.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE CONCLUSION.

"OH! married love! each heart shall own,
When two congenial souls unite,
Thy golden chains inlaid with down,
Thy lamp with heaven's own splendor bright."

"Then come the wild weather—come sleet or come snow,
We will stand by each other, however it blow;
Oppression and sickness, and sorrow and pain,
Shall be to our true love as links to the chain."

A HAPPY assemblage of ten or a dozen persons, are grouped about the cabin of a noble vessel, destined, in a short time, to plow the Atlantic ocean. The hour, toward the decline of day, "When evening draws her crimson curtains on." Ave Maria! blessed be that hour. The sun has lost his rage, and in his downward course, sends only animating warmth, and vital luster. The sails are flapping lazily in this soft, seductive, vesper breeze; all is in a state of readiness, but they await the propitious breath of heaven to waft them on their way. What a delicious, enchanting hour it is without and within that ship's cabin. Is it not blessed?

At a table, in the center of a long narrow floor, are seated four young persons, engaged in some innocent game of chance; they make the walls ring with their hilarious mirth. Our special favorite and friend, Doctor Walter Jocelyn, has for the nonce, exchanged his pretty bride Emma, for the no less interesting one of Mr. Miles (our own sweet Mary Green). They are partners at some mimic game of checkered life.

At the far end of the room, another couple are standing apart, fondly watching two beautiful children, as they ever and anon bound lightly into the lap of a fine-looking, rather stout, middle aged negress. She puts an arm around each, while they kiss her tawny cheeks and lips, and pat her face and neck caressingly; then the children kiss each other.

“O Aunt Molly!” said the little Clarence, “I am so glad to see you, and I do love you so dearly. I have so often heard poor mamma and grandma talk and weep over the good and bad times they used to see together with you. They thought I was asleep, but I noted it all down; because something whispered to me that I should live to see the good creature myself, and so you see I have. Mamma used to mourn and lament so, because she could not have you to nurse me, too; and now think of it, the good God has sent you back to us, and you have got to raise me, when Mr. Gooch is not raising me, and my little cousin, or rather sister Genevieve. Vevy, you must love Aunt Molly with all your might. It would be a great sin, child, not to do so, and call her mammy, as I shall. And you see, little one, I am older than you. ‘No, I am not, but I ought to be, which is the same thing; therefore you must mind all I say to you; will you not, dear little Vevy?’” and he kissed her again.

“Now, mammy, you must tell us how you got away from them overseers and all? Aunt Molly, they didn’t dare to use you ill, did they?” And the boy looks defiantly and menacingly into space, as he clenched his little fist.

“Oh never mind all that, honey, what’s done is done, and thar’s no undoing it. Bless God! child, I run’d away. I no sooner hear the news that Miss Pet was ‘live, had come up to life—for she was once dead and buried, that’s sartain as the sparks fly downward—I say, I no sooner git this information than old Molly Wise sets her wits to

work to circumvention 'em. I didn't know I should find the dear critter in such a good quarters. I did 'spect to find her subluged in all sorts of sorrows, like as theretofore. But, bless God ! my poor, dear, darling pet lamb done got to the right fold, in the true and proper sheeps-cote at last ; and now this old nigger is jes gwine to follow you all to the end of the yarth. Yes indeed, life and death, and principalities, and powers, is never gwine to separate me from her agin."

Just then a beautiful, sandy-haired child pulled away from its pretty little dot of a mother, who was sitting near, contemplating the merry trio, and toddling toward the good old nurse, held out her little arms, imploring to be taken up.

As the affectionate creature stooped to raise her, she says, "Bless God ! honey, who child this ? I jes b'lieve this town is full of darlin' pretty children. Who is it, honey Clarry ?"

"Why, mammy, that is my little wife. In a few years more, I am going to marry her ; and now I think of it, you must raise her for me too, just like you did mamma. I want you to make her as much like my own and her own mother as ever you can."

Marianna is hanging on the arm of her husband. She looks up in his face with a look of ineffable love, as she murmurs, "O Conrad ! my great, my good, my adored husband ! Can it last ? • Can such entire, such complete happiness last ? I am alarmed at my fullness of joy. I tremble, I almost fear to breathe, lest it shall be swept away. Blame me not, dear friend, the past has, you know, been so fearful." He drew her nearer to him, and replied by repeating those felicitous lines :

" An hour like this is worth a thousand passed
In pomp or ease ; 'tis present to the last.
Years glide by untold — 'tis still the same,
As fresh, as fair as on the day it came."

Minny and Doctor Brown now join our wedded lovers, and seeing a drop force its way from under those beautiful lids, she exclaims, in affected amazement, "Aweel, aweel, Myra weeping! I wad na hae thought it. See, dear Gabe, the puir thing is so used to tears, that she must e'en weep because there is nae mair cause for sorrow; greeting because she is happy. Aweel, aweel."

"Well," said Gabriel, laughing, "I *had* thought that tall, grand, dark-looking *youth* there by her side would wipe all tears from her eyes. How is it, sir? Does your love cool by possession so soon? Come, come, a truce with all glamouring."

"Ah! niver fash, niver fash, as Mrs. Brown says; you just look to your own eyes, friend Gabriel," said Murray. "All's well here."

"Aweel, Mrs. Murray, I never did, as ye know, reply to that letter I received from Mrs. Josiah Gaines, until to-day. Here it is; if ye or the colonel wad like to add a word by way o' postscript, ye ken ye can do sae now." She hands them the letter, which Marianna reads aloud.

"DEAR MRS. JOSIAH GAINES — I trust ye will pardon this seeming neglect. I hope ye can do sae freely, being as ye are now at the head o' the family, and also a mither; which duties ye must ken are very engrossing. And now, madam, before I ramble on from the point o' the subject, and may thereby forget it, let me tell you that you hae my cordial sympathy, as ye did claim in your letter, but not in the way ye expect. I sympathize with ye because ye are amang strangers; but I pity ye, and blame ye baith, at the same time, that ye should thus shut your een to your ain blessed good fortune. I tak' it, ye hae got just the very husband which God intended for you. And I can't help but think, that he is the very man to suit your case. From what ye tell me, I think it likely, with time, he will bring a' the little crooks and cranks in your

temper out straight. And I must further remark, Mrs. Gaines, that I am filled with admiration at his calm, dignified demeanor, as ye describe it.

"I shall not presume to offer ye any advice, well knowing that ye wad na tak' it; but just let a very happy little wife whisper something in yer lugs—If ye wad be happy and respected, ye maun gie up all gallavanting and seek yer comforts and enjoyments at hame, in the heart o' yer ain gude man, and in the bosom o' yer ain family—gie over all fooling and flirting.

"Ye ask to be informed of the *goings* on here since ye left. I have na got time to enter into lang details. But to begin at the beginning. Your father seems to enjoy his ain good health and spirits. He lives at the same place and in the same way; has the Governor and a few friends to eat his gude dinners, and drink his fine wines every Sunday as usual. The little Governor was married soon after you left. Na doubt he missed you, as ye say ye regretted him; but he did na go cast down about it; but like a wise man, cured the old luve wi' the new. Mr. and Mrs. Calderwood appear to be somewhat under the ban of that fickle goddess, Fortune, about this present writing. She is, and has been, for some time, ill wi' a bad cough, caught in one o' her many tramps through the town alang with Miss Nancy Jones, trying to hear all that '*they do say.*' Jones is now a fixture in the house, as nurse and companion, which wad be purgatory to me. They are left pretty much alone to feed on that aliment, gathered at such pains. Mr. Calderwood is confined to his easy-chair, flannel gown, and slippers, wi' chronic gout. This, I am told, sits most uneasily on the dashing beau and polished roué. Miss Emma and her friend, Miss Mary Green, were both married yesterday. Col. Murray, salamander-like, escaped and came to light as ye did predict, in due time—about the hour that his mother died. He was married also yesterday, wi' the rest o'

them; all in St. Paul's church, by the good Dr. Mercer, and to the very lady ye did inquire about—the beautiful milliner, away down on Market street. He has come into possession of an immense fortune. Murdoch, that dark and handsome Night Watch—that *Black Knight*—is also married.

"I think there is nothing else that ye asked me about. In half an hour we shall sail for my ain native city of Edinburg. Canna' ye come there to see us? All the new married folks are of the party, and na doubt every one o' them, as well as my ain sel, wad be glad to meet ye over seas. Do meet us in Scotland. Present my regards to your gude man, Mr. Gaines.

"Yours respectfully,

"MINNY BROWN."

Mr. Gooch now coming into the cabin, joins them, and while they stand there, in mute happiness and rapt admiration of each other, and everything else in God's beautiful world, hoping and looking forward to many more days of felicity on this His footstool, and feeling that faith in their hearts which reaches beyond the vale, they resign themselves to His care and guidance, no longer, for a moment, doubting Providence.

They are recalled from their soarings by the word of command from aloft, spoken through the captain's trumpet to "weigh anchor," and in a short time after, the good ship is scudding before the evening gale.

"Merrily, merrily goes the bark,
On a breeze from the northward free;
So shoots through the morning sky the lark,
Or the swan the summer sea."

Dec. 28 1876





